

Rediscovery of *Amegilla garrula* (Rossi, 1790) in Cyprus (Hymenoptera: Apidae)

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INTRODUCTION

The bees of Cyprus have received particular attention thanks to the early faunistic work of G.A. Mavromoustakis, who notably reported the results of his collections and described numerous taxa in his series “*On the bees of Cyprus*” (e.g. Mavromoustakis 1949). Subsequently, while some groups have been relatively well studied, others have been overlooked and our knowledge remains largely incomplete, as evidenced by the many species newly reported or described from Cyprus in recent decades (Varnava et al. 2020). Such is the case for the genus *Amegilla* Friese, which—despite being treated by Brooks (1988) in his global revision of the Anthophorini—has not undergone any recent, detailed study. Based on recent fieldwork and examination of material from the Mavromoustakis collection (Nicosia), we confirm the presence of *Amegilla garrula* (Rossi, 1790) in Cyprus, and provide additional clarification regarding confusion surrounding this taxon in Cyprus-focused literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 24 Cypriot specimens of *A. garrula* were examined: 2 males and 6 females from the Mavromoustakis collection and 10 males and 6 females from newly collected material (Figs. 1, 2). DNA barcodes (COI) of two of these specimens, generated by Loutsiou (2025), were analysed in comparison with sequences of mainland *A. garrula* and two other widespread West-Palearctic species from the subgenus *Amegilla s. str.*, i.e. *A. quadrifasciata* (de Villers) and *A. ochroleuca* (Pérez). The resulting phylogenetic tree fully supports the identity of the Cypriot specimens (Fig. 3). Although a record was already cited by Georghiou (1977), this taxon was discarded from the list of the bees of Cyprus due to the lack of information supporting its presence on the island across specialized bee publications, and because of the numerous errors in the species list provided by this author (Varnava et al. 2020). Our examination of the Mavromoustakis collection revealed evidence that helps explain the

absence of *A. garrula* from most Cyprus-related publications: a female specimen collected at Krios River near Kilani in September 1937 was found bearing an identification label reading “*Anthophora* [female] *harmalae* F. Mor. J. D. Alfken det.” A second label, also handwritten by Alfken, contained the comment: “*A. eburnea* Rad. is, I believe, perhaps the same species”. The morphology of this specimen is entirely consistent with the other examined *A. garrula*, and the absence of arolia between the claws clearly invalidates Alfken’s identification, as *Anthophora harmalae* Morawitz and *A. eburnea* Radoszkowsky possess arolia, like all members of the genus (Brooks 1988). It is worth noting that this apparent misidentification by Alfken is surprising, considering his expertise in recognising *Amegilla garrula* (Alfken 1926; 1927). However, whether due to a misidentification or a labelling error, this finding suggests that the records of *Anthophora harmalae* Morawitz presented by Mavromoustakis (1949; 1951)—and subsequently cited by Pittioni (1950), Varnava et al. (2020), and all later publications relying on these sources (e.g. Reverté et al. 2023)—actually refer to misidentified specimens of *Amegilla garrula*. This is supported by the origin localities of the specimens examined from the Mavromoustakis collection, which mostly correspond to those from which *Anthophora harmalae* was reported in his publications (Mavromoustakis 1949, 1951).

MATERIAL

Specimen data available at <https://doi.org/10.5886/lbrb6k>

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