

***Pontogammarus robustoides* G. O. Sars, 1894. – New potentially invasive amphipod species to the Bulgarian inland waters**

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The amphipod species *Pontogammarus robustoides* G. O. Sars, 1894 (Amphipoda, Crustacea) is of Ponto-Caspian origin and in recent years has been reported as invasive alien species in several Central and West European countries. In Bulgaria, the species was reported from the Bulgarian sector of the Danube River and some Black Sea coastal lakes and rivers. This is the first report of the species for the fauna of the inland waters in Bulgaria.

The species was found for the first time in the Mochuritsa River, at the confluence with the Tundzha River (near Yambol Town, Aegean Sea basin), on 03.10.2006 (23 individuals). Subsequently the species was recorded again at the same locality: in 2009 (41 specimens) and in 2013 (100 specimens). Additionally, two native amphipod species, *Gammarus komareki* Schaferna, 1922 and *Gammarus arduus* G. S. Karaman, 1975, were found to occur at closely located sites (the Mochuritsa River at Vodenichane Village, 15 km upstream, and the main stream of Tundzha River). In 2011 *P. robustoides* was recorded in high abundance in the littoral area of the Ovcharitsa Reservoir, which is affiliated to another river basin (Maritsa River, Aegean Sea basin). Because of the high potential of the species to spread in the inland river systems in Bulgaria and to become invasive, further studies of its distribution, vectors of introduction, biological traits and ecological requirements are urgently needed.

Keywords: *Pontogammarus robustoides*, translocated species, Aegean Sea basin.

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