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SHORT COMMUNICATION

# *Pyrrhidium sanguineum* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae), a newly introduced saproxylic beetle in Israel

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Welsh Oak Longhorn Beetle—*Pyrrhidium sanguineum* (Linnaeus, 1758)—is a small to medium size (6–16 mm) saproxylic coleopteran species, which is characterized by a spectacular purple or sometimes yellow-orange colour of the pronotum and elytra (Figs 1, 2). *Pyrrhidium sanguineum* is distributed in Europe (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Belarus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Russia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Germany, Greece (incl. Crete), Hungary, Ireland, Italy (incl. Sardinia and Sicily), Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Moldavia, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia,

Fig. 1. *Pyrrhidium sanguineum* female on bark.

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Fig. 2. *Pyrrhidium sanguineum* female, habitus, dorsal view. Body length, 16 mm.

Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine), North Africa (Egypt, Tunisia), and West Asia (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Iran, Syria, Turkey) (Sama & Löbl 2010).

It occurs in broad-leaved forests with oak as a preferred host, but can also feed on *Castanea*, *Fagus*, *Carpinus*, *Ulmus* and *Pyrus malus* (Bílý & Mehl 1989), as well as on *Aesculus*, *Betula*, *Cerasus*, *Corylus*, *Prunus* and very occasionally *Pinus* (Starzyk 1999).

In Europe, adults are active around April and May. Eggs are laid in dead decaying (also standing) trees, as well as in crevices of recently dry bark and cut branches. Since the larvae attack dry or rotten wood, they are not a threat to living trees. The larvae also do not pose danger to structural wood or furniture in which the wood is too dry and solid. In order to prevent further infestation in cases of adult emergence the bark should be removed to prevent oviposition (Duffy 1953).

In Israel, *P. sanguineum* specimens were collected from oak timber imported from Ukraine. The timber, which had been imported for heating, was sold in the Upper Galilee area to many households, where adult beetles appeared later on in large numbers. Several specimens were collected by Miriam Melnik-Perlin in Kefar Veradim on the 17th of December 2016 and kindly passed on to me for identification.

The bark was considered fumigated by the exporter company, and this might be the cause of the timber getting through without examination by the Plant Protection and Inspection Services, which operate within the framework of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Israel.

It is more than probable that adults already reached nearby oak forests, which are common in the Galilee. It will be necessary to track adults of this species in the area and to monitor its spread if such event occurs.

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