

How suitable are man-made water bodies as habitats for Odonata?



Many studies have reported a negative impact of freshwater habitat modification on biota. Nevertheless, some man-made water bodies have proven to be valuable for biodiversity conservation as they can harbour many species. We investigated 36 man-made water bodies to determine their suitability as habitats for Odonata. Larvae were sampled in littoral, during the summer months of 2016 and 2017. At each sampling site, ten samples were collected using a benthos hand net. A total of 21 Odonata species was recorded. Odonata assemblages mainly consisted of common widespread species. Yet, at Vlačine Reservoir, located in the Dinaric Western Balkan ecoregion, we also recorded a rare and endangered Mediterranean species, *Lindenia tetraphylla* (Vander Linden, 1825). Aquatic and riparian vegetation, water level fluctuations and dissolved oxygen concentration had the highest influence on Odonata, showing that man-made water bodies with a well-developed riparian zone and aquatic vegetation, and with low daily and seasonal water level fluctuations, can provide suitable habitats for diverse Odonata species. Odonata are among the

sensitive freshwater insects widely used as ecological indicators and umbrella species, therefore these results about their assemblages in heavily modified and man-made habitats could contribute to future conservation activities of freshwater biota and habitats.

Auteurs du document : Marina Vilenica, Ivana Pozojević, Natalija Vučković, Zlatko Mihaljević

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