

Editorial note

The blue sharks legacy

The blue sharks have always known that Cabo Verde is special. It is said that, after the last World Cup — in which the Cabo Verde national team, our “blue sharks”, surprised half the planet with their tenacity — all that remains is for FIFA to admit a truly pelagic team onto the pitch. Instead of football boots, a caudal fin; instead of VAR, a school of Forkbeard reviewing plays in real time. In this imaginary championship, the blue sharks would tightly mark our fouls against biodiversity: they would not miss a goal in species identification, nor tolerate misplaced passes in agricultural pest management, let alone red cards for the quality of figures in our scientific articles. Until then, we remain on solid ground, striving to match that pelagic rigour, playing in every position — from biogeography to genetics, from taxonomy to digital tools supporting scientific research.

Building on this legacy of success by the blue sharks, we present an edition of *Zoologia Caboverdiana* featuring original contributions to the knowledge of the archipelago’s fauna and to the improvement of scientific production conditions in the region. The first article is a short note recording the first occurrence of the praying mantis *Empusa pennata* (Thunberg, 1815) in Cabo Verde, expanding the known distribution of this species, traditionally associated with the western Mediterranean, from southwestern Morocco to southern Europe. By documenting the species in Cabo Verde, the authors also reopen the discussion on dispersal patterns and occurrence of this and other understudied species in Atlantic archipelagos.

The second contribution is a brief note entitled “First genetic data for *Bandeirenica caboverda* (Pierrard, 1987) (Diplopoda: Odontopygidae) from Cabo Verde”, which leads us into the intriguing world of millipedes

and the interface between taxonomy, genetics, and agriculture. The species was assigned to the genus *Bandeirenica* based on morphological analyses, but until now no genetic data supported this classification. These data are now presented for the first time for Cabo Verde, based on sampling from the island of Santo Antão. This new information opens perspectives for a better understanding of the origin and population structure of *B. caboverda*, as well as for the development of more informed strategies for monitoring and managing the impact of this agricultural pest.

This edition also includes a special communication of an essentially informative nature, relevant across the scientific community. Reflecting a paradigm shift for the journal, the text reviews fundamental topics related to the access and quality of visual resources used in scientific publications and presents a free-access online platform providing high-quality digital files in standardised Geographic Information Systems (GIS) formats. This tool seeks to mitigate frequent technical constraints in resource-limited contexts, facilitating and democratising access to appropriate graphical materials for producing higher-quality figures, diagrams, and other essential elements of contemporary scientific communication in the life and earth sciences related to the Cabo Verde archipelago, produced by researchers, naturalists, students, and environmental managers.

Together, these works illustrate the kind of “national team” that *Zoologia Caboverdiana* seeks to bring onto the field of science: articles that score clear goals in advancing knowledge of the archipelago’s fauna, studies that strengthen the articulation between classical taxonomy and molecular genetics, and initiatives that improve the playing conditions

for those producing and communicating science in Cabo Verde.

While the blue sharks continue to compete in the championship of survival in our seas, we reaffirm our commitment to documenting, understanding, and sharing the country's

extraordinary zoological diversity, with the technical rigour and creativity that science and the planet demand.

With that, on behalf of the Editorial Committee, I wish you an enjoyable read and hope you appreciate this issue.

Evandro Lopes
Interim Editor-in-Chief of
Zoologia Caboverdiana