

with high salt content (often exploited for obtaining salt), in which halobionts are found in high percentages (between 38 and 55%), and there is an almost equal proportion of halophilic and accompanying species (about 25%). The saltmarsh of Cordovilla is included in the second type and hence it is concluded that, as whole, it can be considered as a site with moderately to high edaphic salt content. This analysis indicate that carabid assemblages should be considered as good empirical indicators of the soil content in salt, at least in relation to the influence of this and associated factors on the occurrence of particular insect faunas.

The species with a Mediterranean chorology are the most frequent, as expected from previous results in neighbouring saltmarshes, and in larger Iberian areas as well. It is noteworthy the high proportion of species with large distributional areas (cosmopolitan) in Cordovilla, in comparison with the common percentages between 15 and 18% reported for large Iberian areas. This finding holds also true for close humid places to Cordovilla, and is here postulated as a result of the ecological preferences of these species for paludicolous and ripicolous habitats.

The rich carabid assemblage of Cordovilla is indicative of the high biotic value of the saltmarsh, and therefore legal protection is needed for preserving this patrimony in biodiversity.

**Key words:** Coleoptera, Carabidae, Saltmarsh, Cordovilla (Albacete, SE Spain).

## 0. INTRODUCCIÓN

Los Carabidae son una familia de insectos coleópteros bien representada en la península, ya que se citan unas 1.100 especies en el catálogo de ZABALLOS y JEANNE (1994), cifra esta que se aproxima a 1200 especies en la actualidad. Se trata de coleópteros de vida epigea, en su mayor parte predadores de insectos, oxiuros, anélidos y moluscos. Solo algunos grupos comprenden especies fitófagas cuando son larvas, adultos o durante ambos periodos del ciclo vital (*Amara*, *Zabrus*, *Ophonus*, *Harpalus*, etc.).

Los carábidos y sus larvas se pueden considerar beneficiosos pues se alimentan de gran cantidad de insectos perjudiciales y, a su vez, raramente constituyen plagas. Tienen una o dos generaciones a lo largo del año. Aunque hay varios tipos de especies según la época del año en que se reproducen, predominan las que lo hacen en primavera y otoño ("spring