

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DIGITAL IDENTIFICATION KEY FOR THE ANTS (HYMENOPTERA: FORMICIDAE) OF GREECE WITH AN ANNOTATED ELECTRONIC CATALOGUE OF RELEVANT MATERIAL

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The development of this digital tool is a project that seeks to provide a user-friendly interactive identification guide to ants in Greece and their taxonomy, as part of a larger set of worldwide ant identification guides. This guide includes a taxonomic database of ants in Greece, an easy to use identification key and pictorial ant information. Linnaeus II, distributed by ETI, is a multifunctional software package for biodiversity researchers, that was developed for this purpose. Identification keys developed by several taxonomists such as Agosti, Collingwood and Kutter, along with the annotated catalogue of Greek ants (Legakis, 2011), were used to create a complete identification key. In addition, typical accompanying figures of ant subfamilies, genera and species included in these keys were added to the database files assisting the process of ant identification. Additional information and photos of ants stored in the global website AntWeb were used in order to create a functional research tool. As a result, the project contains text and multimedia information (descriptions, synonyms, common names, taxonomic information, literature references schematics and photographs) on the ants of Greece. Furthermore, it will be used as an online tool with the creation of a website. The objective of this project is to contribute to the biogeography of Greece and to be used as a useful tool for systematists and biodiversity researchers working in Greece and adjacent areas.