This paper documents the presence of Gammarus komareki Schäferna, 1922 in Romania for the first time. Twenty two individuals were collected from a stream in south western Dobrogea (south eastern Romania). Some notes regarding the ecology of this species are given. Its biogeography is discussed within a palaeogeographic and phylogenetic context. Regarding the actual distribution and recent molecular phylogenetic studies, it appears that Gammarus komareki has originated in the Oligocene of the Eastern Paratethys. Drawings depicting the morphology of the Romanian specimens are provided.

INTRODUCTION

With more than 200 described species the genus Gammarus has a wide Holarctic distribution in a diverse array of habitats, ranging from marine to brackish and freshwater epigean to hypogean (Väinölä et al., 2008). According to recent molecular studies the genus is monophyletic and has an Early Neozoic Tethyan origin (Hou et al., 2011). Gammarus komareki Schäferna, 1922 was described
from Bellovo village near Pazardjik, Bulgaria (Karaman & Pinkster, 1977). Its distribution range extends from Bulgaria and northern Greece throughout the northern half of Turkey into the north-western part of Iran (Karaman & Pinkster, 1977; Grabowski & Pešić, 2007; Zamanpoore et al., 2011). Schellenberg (1937) reported this species from the mouth of the Rybniza River in the Republic of Moldova. Despite other studies in the area the species was not found (Jaźdżewski & Konopacka, 1988). The phylogenetic study of Hou et al. (2011) revealed a high degree of cryptic diversity within this species and showed that *Gammarus kesslerianus* Martynov, 1931, a proposed junior synonym of *G. komareki* (cf. Grabowski, 2007) from the Crimean Peninsula, may be in fact a distinct species. Carăuşu et al. (1955) reported several localities of *G. komareki* in Romania, but Karaman & Pinkster (1977) revealed that these reports actually belong to *Gammarus arduus* G. Karaman, 1975. In the present paper *G. komareki* is reported for the first time from Romania. Although the area where the species was found (south-western Dobrogea, see fig. 1) was sampled before (Petrescu, 1996), this species was not previously reported. Because the taxonomy of *G. komareki* is unclear at present (Grabowski & Pešić, 2007) and the fact that it has a wide distribution with isolated populations exhibiting cryptic diversity, it will be treated as a species complex throughout this paper.

![Fig. 1. Map representing the area of the sampling locality.](image)