



The hand of man first then Santa Rosalia's blessing: a critical examination of the supposed criticism by Samraoui (2017)

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Abstract

Samraoui (J Insect Conserv. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10841-017-9966-2>, 2017) claims that he shows evidence that our conservation plan of *Urothemis edwardsii* has failed and that natural dispersal was the only cause of the recent rapid range expansion of the species in Northeast Algeria. Here, we show that his analysis is biased, many of his arguments are erroneous and strongly contradictory, many key studies are dismissed, and the few data used as evidence to refute our conclusions rather confirm them. We also provide data to prove that our conservation plan did not cause any harm to the source population by comparing exuviae-based estimation of population size in 2012 and 2016. We discuss the need for future monitoring and management and highlight that the recommendations of Samraoui (J Insect Conserv, 2017) are misleading, and thus are unlikely to bring us closer to an effective long-term conservation of the species in the region. Beyond our criticism, we explain why we should not dismiss the direct and indirect implications of final instar larvae translocation in successful colonization of odonates in particular, which could also be applied to aquatic insects in general.

Keywords Conservation · Reintroduction · Translocation · Exuviae · Population size · Colonization · Odonata · Dragonfly · North Africa

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