14th January 2016

Dear Professor **Abdullah Hasbenli**,

Editor of the **Journal of the Entomological Research Society**

We would be grateful if you consider for review the attached manuscript entitled “**Exotic fruit flies (Diptera: Drosophilidae) meet in a biodiversity hotspot**” by Carla Rego, António Franquinho Aguiar, Délia Cravo and Mário Boieiro.

This manuscript presents original data on the recent introduction of three exotic drosophilid species – *Acletoxenus formosus*, *Drosophila suzukii* and *Zaprionus indianus* – in Madeira archipelago and we also discuss their potential impact in economy and native ecosystems. Our findings followed a spatially extensive survey of Madeira archipelago Drosophilidae coupled with the study of museum specimens which allowed a better understanding on the abundance, distribution and biodiversity of this insect group in Madeiran islands.

Our team has been committed to study and make public the unique insect biodiversity of Madeiran islands for nearly two decades. More recently, we participated on the production of a book on Madeira biodiversity, which is now a reference work for these islands, and we also worked on the identification of the most threatened endemic insects in Madeira archipelago as well as the most noxious invasive species.

Our recent finding of two invasive drosophilids – *Drosophila suzukii* and *Zaprionus indianus* – in Madeira archipelago is a matter of great concern due to the potential consequences of these species on the island economy and environment. Both species caused severe losses in fruit production in invaded countries and have also threatened native biodiversity, particularly other drosophilids. The recent arrival of *D. suzukii* to Europe was followed by huge losses on fruit production and we fear the impact that this species may have on the poorly structured economy of Madeira.

In our manuscript we provide information on the distribution, abundance and habitat associations of the invasive drosophilids and propose some actions to monitor and control them following the guidelines defined by European (and other) intergovernmental agencies. Also, by taking in consideration the high number of endemics in Madeira archipelago and the vulnerability of several species, we propose a regular monitoring of native habitats as an early warning system to detect the presence of invasive species in most vulnerable areas. Finally, our manuscript aims to call attention for the increasing number of alien species that arrive to oceanic islands and the urgent need to develop effective surveillance and control programs to prevent accidental human-mediated biological invasions.

We declare that our manuscript complies with the publication criteria and editorial policies adopted by the **Journal of the Entomological Research Society**. Our manuscript has not been previously published elsewhere, nor is it for consideration in another journal. We suggest the following potential reviewers of our manuscript taking in consideration their expertise on this subject and the criteria defined by the **Journal of the Entomological Research Society**:

- **Paulo Borges**, Department of Agrarian Sciences, University of Azores (Portugal), e-mail: pborges@uac.pt

- **Teresa Rebelo**, CESAM/Department of Animal Biology, University of Lisbon (Portugal), e-mail: mtrebelo@fc.ul.pt

- **Marta Pascual**, Facultat de Biologia, University of Barcelona (Spain), e-mail: martapascual@ub.edu

- **Luis Serra**, Facultat de Biologia, University of Barcelona (Spain), e-mail: lserra@ub.edu

We hope that you deem our manuscript worthy of publication in the **Journal of the Entomological Research Society**.

Thank you very much for your time and attention.

Sincerely yours,

Carla Rego (on behalf of all authors)