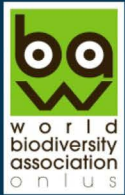


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Lucanus tetraodon sicilianus Planet, 1889: Italy, Sicily, Madonie, Piano Battaglia

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Coleoptera Lucanidae. Lucanidae, belonging to the Superfamily Scarabaeoidea, are conspicuous-looking beetles and usually medium to large in size. There are about 1,600 species worldwide. In the larval stage they are saproxylophagous or rhizophagous, while in the adult stage they tend to feed on sap and sugary substances. They are characterized by marked sexual dimorphism. In Italy they are represented by four subfamilies: Aesalinae MacLeay, 1819, Syndesinae MacLeay, 1819, Dorcinae Parry, 1864 and Lucaninae Latreille, 1804, with the latter being larger than the others. In Italy, specifically, the subfamily Lucaninae includes two genera: *Lucanus* Scopoli, 1763 and *Platycerus* Geoffroy, 1762. Respectively, the first genus includes the species: *L. cervus cervus* (Linnaeus, 1758), widespread from central to northern Italy, *L. tetraodon tetraodon* Thunberg, 1806, widespread in central southern Italy, and *L. tetraodon sicilianus* Planet, 1899, endemic to Sicily. The genus *Platycerus*, on the other hand, is represented by *P. caraboides* (Linnaeus, 1758) and *P. caprea* (Degeer, 1774), both found throughout Italy excluding the major islands. *Lucanus tetraodon sicilianus* has a body size of 30 to 50 mm and the sexes are distinguished by dimorphism. The male is dark brown with large, broad head and developed mandibles, thin, arched and bifid at the end, antennae have pectiniform club of 5 or 6 articles, elytra broad and speckled. Females have a more robust, almost black body, smaller head with less developed antennae and mandibles. It lives in deciduous (oak, chestnut and beech) and coniferous forests of the Nebrodi, Madonie, Etna and Bosco Ficuzza. Not very common. Larval development occurs in decaying stumps or in the roots of old trees, and lasts an average of 4-5 years. The adult comes out of the cocoon in summer from June to August. It is active at dusk when it flies searching for females. It is attracted by artificial lights. The male uses its large mandibles during copulation or in competitive fights with other males.

Viviano Roberto. Via M. Cipolla 10, Palermo, Italy; e-mail: roberto.viviano3@outlook.com