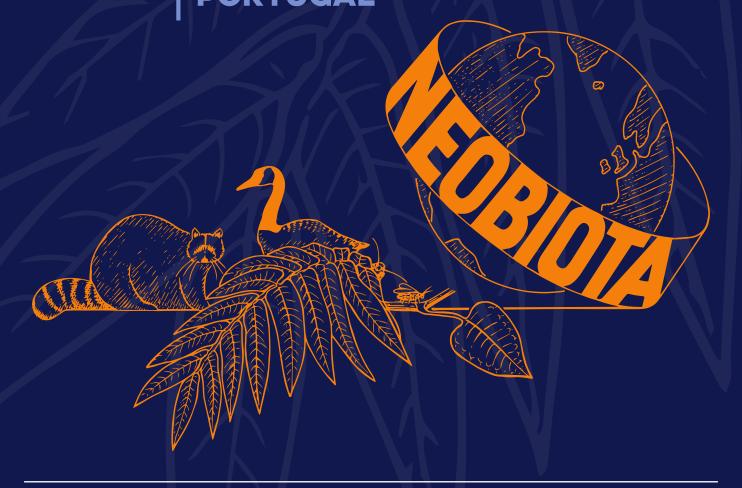
**NEOBIOTA 2024 BOOK OF ABSTRACTS** 

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Session 5 – Conservation issues and biological invasions

### COTONEASTER SPECIES FROM THE SERIES BULLATI – A NEW ALLOCHTHONOUS SHRUB FOR THE FLORA OF SERBIA AND THE BALKAN PENINSULA

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Non-native species, especially invasive ones, are a constant threat to native flora. They are becoming increasingly prevalent in new areas due to rapid urbanization, trade, tourism, agriculture and climate change. The patterns of their distribution and abundance have not been sufficiently studied in the mountainous areas of Serbia and the Balkan Peninsula.

During a floristic surveys of the Zlatibor Nature Park (Western Serbia) in the period 2020–2023, the population of Cotoneaster from the series Bullati was discovered in the wider vicinity of the locality Partizanske vode, in the forest community of Pinus nigra and P. sylvestris right next to the highway. This is a new allochthonous taxon for the flora of Serbia and the Balkan Peninsula. The native ranges of the taxa from this group are restricted to Southwestern China. Detailed data on the distribution, morphology, ecology, habitat preferences and population size of the newly-recorded Cotoneaster taxon are presented. The population is most likely of sub spontaneous origin, counting c. 30 individuals, with a significant degree of cover in the shrub layer. Given the fact that the taxon has penetrated far into the pine forest, it is feared that the species could spread into the surrounding natural pine forest habitats as well.

Keywords: Cotoneaster, potential spread, non-native mountain species, Serbia.

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