The post-embryonic development of the millipede *Spinotarsus caboverdus* (Diplopoda, Odontopygidae)

BEATA NASCIMENTO¹ & HELGA SERMANN²

¹ National Institute for Research and Agriculture Development, C.P. 84 - Praia, Santiago, Republic of Cape Verde, bnascimento@inida.gov.cv
² Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Landwirtschaftlich-Gärtnerische Fakultät, Fachgebiet Phytomedizin, Lentzeallee 55/57, 14195 Berlin, Germany, helga.sermann@agrar.hu-berlin.de

*Spinotarsus caboverdus* is an endemic millipede existing, until now, on two islands of the archipelago of Cape Verde. The species causes damages on many plants and crops and is therefore an important economic pest in our country.

In several studies at different times per year on more than 100 collected individuals from Santo Antao and on individuals from a laboratory population the morphological structure of all juvenile stages and the adults of *S. caboverdus* was analysed.

The number of podous segments and apodous segments, the number of repugnatorial glands, and the number of ocelli were studied for each developmental stage. So we had recognised ten juvenile stages and exuviations up to the adults.

The first three juvenile stages live stationary in the soil, protected by the egg (soil) capsule. These young stages are white and feed from the egg yolk and organic matter in the soil. Only the juvenile stage IV leaves the soil capsule and moves to the soil surface. Up to this stage the color will be more and more brown. From that stage the species starts to nourish of live vegetables tissue. At the seventh juvenile stage the sexual characters of female and male can be distinguished.

The females and males differ in their number of segments and length. Females are on average 25 cm long and males 22 cm. After the last exuviation they can still grow, but a further exuviation was never recognised.