

# **Preliminary researches concerning ecology and dynamics of the subterranean realm – especially of percolation waters and puddles filled with percolation water**

**Tanja PIPAN<sup>1</sup> & Anton BRANCELJ<sup>2</sup>**

1 Karst Research Institute ZRC SAZU, Titov trg 2, p.p. 59, SL-6230, Postojna, Slovenia. [pijan@zrc-sazu.si](mailto:pijan@zrc-sazu.si)

2 National Institute of Biology, Vecna pot 111, SL-1101, Ljubljana, Slovenia. [anton.brancelj@uni-lj.si](mailto:anton.brancelj@uni-lj.si)

Biodiversity and abundance of hypogean fauna from percolation waters and puddles filled with percolation water from six cave systems from Slovenia have been studied. Four categories of small water-bodies were distinguished: water filtered directly from dripping, small depressions on stalagmites, puddles on clay and puddles on flowstone. Faunistical data were supplemented with other data, particularly data on geographical position, physical and chemical data on water quality, cave roof thickness, geological structure, hydrology and vegetation above the caves. In the study a special emphasis is given to the copepod fauna (Crustacea: Copepoda) because of the extreme diversity of fauna associated with the high level of endemism.