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1 – Escola Superior Agrária de Santarém, S. Pedro, Apartado 310, 2001-904 Santarém, Portugal

In 1997, in 50 surveys of irrigated rice fields (*Oryza sativa* L.), 47 species of vascular plants were recorded in 19 families. Most of the species belonged to the Gramineae and Cyperaceae families. Seven species of algae were found, mostly *Hydrodictyon reticulatum* (42%) and *Chara vulgaris* (38%). *Echinochloa crus-galli* and *Paspalum paspalodes* showed a relative frequency of 98% and 82%, respectively. An interpretation of the major factors is presented influencing weed distribution. Amongst the weeds recorded, 13 were alien species. For these alien species the probable date of introduction into Portugal and into rice fields was determined. The recently introduced neophytes *Heteranthera limosa* and *Heteranthera reniformis* and the increasing presence of red rice (*Oryza sativa*), represent a potential danger to rice culture.

Keywords:

Ecological profiles; rice weeds; neophytes; *Oryza sativa*; *Heteranthera limosa*; *Heteranthera reniformis*

Arroz, Infestante aquática

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