

A new eriophyoid mite in the genus *Disella* from *Ilex paraguariensis* in Brazil

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Abstract

A new phytophagous mite species of *Disella* Newkirk & Keifer genus (Eriophyidae, Nothopodiinae), namely *D. ilicicola* n. sp., is described from *Ilex paraguariensis* Saint Hilaire (Aquifoliaceae) from South Brazil. This is the second Eriophyoidea mite reported infesting *I. paraguariensis* in Brazil and the second *Disella* species described from *Ilex* host plants.

Key words: Acari, Prostigmata, Eriophyoid, Erva-Mate, Aquifoliaceae, South American holly

Introduction

Ilex paraguariensis Saint Hilaire (Aquifoliaceae) is a medium-sized evergreen tree indigenous to Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay, where it is commonly known as “Erva-Mate” or “Yerba Mate”. It is in the holly family, and bears holly-like leaves that are quite stiff and leathery. *Ilex paraguariensis* leaves are used as a natural, refreshing tea beverage since the time of the ancient Indians of Brazil and Paraguay throughout South America. Nowadays it is cultivated in many tropical or subtropical countries to supply a world demand for its leaves. In addition to its standing as a popular beverage, *I. paraguariensis* has been used in herbal medicine as a tonic, diuretic, and as a stimulant to reduce fatigue, suppress appetite, and aid gastric function systems (Taylor, 2004).

Eriophyoidea mites were firstly mentioned infesting *I. paraguariensis* groves in Brazil by Parseval (1939). This author reported the presence of a “disease” symptom, later associated with eriophyid infestations and not with a pathogen, even before 1939, in several localities of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. According to Parseval (1939), the description of these symptoms was similar to those reported by the entomologist E. E.