

New fungus-feeding thrips (Thysanoptera-Phlaeothripinae) from tropical Australia

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Abstract

Three new genera and seven new species of fungal-feeding thrips are described from the northern, tropical zone of Australia. *Majerthrips barrowi* gen. et sp. n. is a large species exhibiting polymorphism associated with wing development and sex, whereas *Senithrips psomus* gen. et sp. n. is a minute monomorphic species with little sexual dimorphism. Also monomorphic is *Jacotia rhodorcha* sp.n., the fourth species described in this genus from Australia. These three were all taken during a biodiversity survey of Barrow Island, Western Australia. Structural variation in *Streptothrips tribulatus* sp. n. from Cape Tribulation, Queensland, confirms the existence of dimorphism in this genus between winged and wingless individuals. *Stomothrips mouldeni* differs from the single described species in this genus in having the mouth cone directed ventrally not posteriorly; it was collected from *Cycas pruinosa* in the north of Western Australia. Also in this area but living at the base of *Triodia* grasses, *Apostlethrips apostus* and *A. pygus* gen. et spp. n. are remarkable amongst the *Eurythrips* group of leaf-litter phlaeothripines in lacking sense cones on antennal segment III, and lacking tergal wing retaining setae in macropterae, also in the setose abdominal apex.

Key words: Thysanoptera, Phlaeothripidae, Australia, new genus, new species, fungus feeding, polymorphism

Introduction

The number of described Thysanoptera species recorded from Australia has risen sharply in recent years, from 287 in 1970 (CSIRO Textbook) to 685 in 2005 (see checklist published by the Australian Biological Resources Study <http://www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity/abrs/online-resources/fauna/afd/group.html>). Much of this descriptive effort has been, and continues to be, targeted at particular genera or at groups of species associated with particular host plants, because such approaches lead to a better