



A new genus and species of *Scirtothrips* genus-group (Thysanoptera: Thripidae) from Kenya, intercepted by Australian quarantine

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The thrips species described here has been taken repetitively in recent years by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service on fresh leaves imported from Kenya. The leaves involved are of *Catha edulis* (Celastraceae), a plant that is used as a mild stimulant, particularly in countries near the Horn of Africa between Kenya and the Yemen. The leaves are either chewed fresh or made into a beverage, and the plant is commonly known as “khat” or “qat”. Leaves of this plant imported into Australia have been found commonly to bear larvae and pupae, and more rarely adults, of an interesting species of Thripinae. Although clearly a member of the *Scirtothrips* genus-group (Masumoto & Okajima, 2007), the species represents a previously undescribed genus. The host range of this species is at present unknown, however Dr Subramanian Sevgan of ICIPE, Kenya, kindly e-mailed photomicrographs of this thrips (19 May 2009) and confirmed that the species had been collected from *Catha edulis* in that country. Although possibly host specific, this new species must continue to be considered a potential hazard by Australian quarantine, because so many species of *Scirtothrips* are highly polyphagous and pestiferous. Moreover, on the same imported leaves larvae and adults of a *Scirtothrips* species also have been taken several times, but this species remains unidentifiable due to the absence of any modern information on the African fauna of *Scirtothrips*. This article describes the new genus and species, with comparisons to related taxa. Nomenclatural details of all taxa mentioned here are given in the web-available world catalogue of Thysanoptera (Mound, 2009). The new names reflect the Kenyan origin of the specimens studied, and the contribution of Katarina Graljuk who first intercepted the species in Australia, and who with her colleagues at the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service help prevent invasive organisms from entering and harming Australian agriculture and ecosystems.

Kenyattathrips gen n.

Antennae 7-segmented, segments III and IV with sensorium forked (Fig. 3); segment II with inner dorsal apical seta very long (Fig. 1). Head with ocellar setae I long, arising far forward on broad inter-antennal projection; compound eyes with no pigmented facets; vertex closely striate; maxillary palps 3-segmented but segment I small (Fig. 9). Pronotum with four pairs of posteromarginal setae (Fig. 2), pair I arising sub-marginally, II and III very long, IV minute; anteromarginal setae very long; discal area transversely striate, without discal setae. Mesonotal sub-median setae arise anterior to median pair (Fig. 4). Metanotum weakly reticulate medially, median setae not at anterior margin. Prosternal ferna almost complete; propinasternum small (Fig. 9); mesosternopleural sutures absent; meso and metasternal endofurca with prominent spinula. Forewing first vein with about 5 basal and 2 distal setae, second vein with 7 to 8 setae (Fig. 8); clavus with 3 veinal but no discal setae (Fig. 4); posteromarginal cilia wavy. Tergite I medially with pair of campaniform sensilla and one pair of minute setae, no microtrichia laterally; tergites II–VI with S1 longer than distance between their bases, regular rows of microtrichia on lateral thirds (Fig. 7); tergites VII–VIII with setae S1 longer and further apart, posterior margins of VII and VIII with complete comb (Fig. 5); IX with many microtrichia on posterior half, no campaniform sensilla; tergite X with no median split nor microtrichia. Sternites transversely reticulate, with no microtrichia; marginal setae arise in front of margin on V–VII; pleurotergites and pleurosternites not developed as independent sclerites (Figs 6,10). Male smaller than female, abdomen without drepanae on tergite IX, and without sternal pore plates. Larva II with many dorsal setae capitate (Figs 11, 12).

Type-species. *Kenyattathrips katarinae* sp.n.

Relationships. The *Scirtothrips* genus-group comprises ten genera. Of these, *Scirtothrips* includes 100 species worldwide (Hoddle & Mound, 2003), *Anascirtothrips* includes four Asian species that are associated with the leaves of *Ficus* (Masumoto & Okajima, 2007), *Cercyothrips* includes two Neotropical species (Mound & Marullo, 1996), but the