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The Palaeotropical genus *Craspedothrips*, with new species from Africa and Malaysia (Thysanoptera, Thripinae)

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Abstract

An identification key is provided to 10 species recognised in the genus *Craspedothrips*, including three new species, *C. malaysiae* from Malaysia, and *C. nyanzai*, *C. poecilus*, and *C. reticulatus* from East Africa. *Plesiopsothrips zurstrasseni* Bournier et al. is considered a new synonym of *C. hargreavesi*, and *Plesiopsothrips carvalhoi* Bournier a new synonym of *C. xanthocerus*. One oriental species, *C. antennalis* Karny, is newly recorded from Australia. Little is known of the biology of most species, but *C. antennatus* and *C. xanthocerus* are both recorded in association with *Hemileia vastatrix* on the leaves of *Coffea* species (Rubiaceae) in Africa, *C. minor* is recorded from flowers of *Cassia* (Fabaceae), and *C. antennalis* is recorded from plants of the family Apocynaceae.

Key words: *Craspedothrips*, new species, Africa, Malaysia

Introduction

Adults of the genus *Craspedothrips* have been collected widely across the Old World tropics between Africa and northern Australia, but usually in low numbers. In species of this genus for which both sexes are known the antennae are sexually dimorphic, with segments IV–VI of males elongate and bearing large numbers of long setae (Figs 11, 29). The sexual dimorphism is so great that males and females in this genus usually cannot be recognised as belonging to the same species on the basis of shared structural features. Sexually dimorphic antennae occur in a few other Thripinae, and this presumably reflects some aspect of behaviour, such as the male aggregations to which females are attracted for mating as described for *Pezothrips kellyanus* (Webster et al. 2006). Unfortunately, almost nothing is known of the biology of most *Craspedothrips* species. With the exception of *C. minor* the larvae are unknown, and no information is available as to whether they develop in flowers or on leaves. Two exceptions are the African species *C. antennatus* and *C. xanthocerus*, both of which have been collected at several localities on the leaves of coffee in association with the rust fungus, *Hemileia vastatrix*. Moreover, plant quarantine services in Japan frequently intercept *C. minor* on *Acacia* or *Cassia siamea* [Fabaceae] with flowers imported from Thailand (Masumoto 2009; Masumoto et al. 2003).

Bhatti (1995) provided bibliographic details for the species of *Craspedothrips*, but identification of most of these has been impossible. In particular, the Oriental species *antennalis* has remained known only from the damaged female lectotype, and the identity of two African species described by Bournier was unclear. The objective of this paper is to provide an identification key to members of the genus, to establish two new synonyms, and to describe four new species - one from Southeast Asia and three from East Africa. Previously established synonyms and full nomenclatural details are available in Mound (2012).

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