

Acarology Bulletin

The Newsletter of the **SYSTEMATIC AND APPLIED ACAROLOGY SOCIETY**

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In this issue.....

- 38 Acarological News
- 38 XXII ICE, Australia
- 38 XXII ICE Acarol. Symposia

- 38 New Books
- 38 Mites (Acari) for pest control
- 38 Mites of greenhouses
- 38 New book on CD

- 40 Contents of Journals
- 40 Sys. Appl. Acarol. 8(2003)
- 41 Exp. & Appl. Acarol. Vol. 30, No. 1-3, 2003
- 42 Vol. 30, No. 4, 2003
- 43 Vol. 31, No. 1-2, 2003
- 44 Vol. 31, No. 3-4, 2003
- 46 Internal. J. Acarol.
- 46 Vol. 29(3) 2003
- 47 Vol. 29(4) 2003

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Acarological News

The XXII International Congress of Entomology, Australia 2004 will be held later this year in Australia. Acarology will be one of the 19 formal sections and will be co-ordinated by Heather Proctor, Dave Walter and Zhi-Qiang Zhang. Four symposia were formally accepted by the Congress (see <http://www.ccm.com.au/icoe/home/default.htm>), but the last one was recently cancelled (which creates an opportunity for another symposium). There will also be sessions for contributed paper and posters. If you plan to attend this congress, please register online before 1 Feb. 2004 to save registration fees. Please also note that you **MUST** submit an abstract by March 31 at the absolute latest. If you do not, you will not be allowed to present at the ICE.

Proposed Symposia:

Marjorie Hoy, USA: **Mites & Microbes**

Heather Proctor, Canada & Andrea Ruf, Germany: **Mite Diversity In Ecological Landscapes: Patterns & Processes**

Zhi-Qiang Zhang, New Zealand & David Walter, Canada: **Evolutionary Ecology of Mite-Insect Associations**

Maurice Sabelis and A. Janssen, The Netherlands: **Indirect Interactions Involving Mites**

New books:

Gerson, U., Smiley, R.L. & Ochoa, R. (2003) *Mites (Acari) for Pest Control*. Blackwell Science, Oxford. 539pp.

Zhang, Z.-Q. (2003) *Mites of Greenhouses: Identification, Biology and Control*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford. 244 pp.

New book on CD

Walter, D.E. & Proctor, H. (2001) **Mites in Soil. An interactive key to mites and other soil arthropods**. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Victoria (www.publish.csiro.au)

This useful tool is one of the ABRS Identification Series. It was developed using the Lucid software (Lucidcentral.com). Lucid keys can be used with a Lucid Player, which is free from Lucidcentral. The authors state that the “interactive keys are designed to help beginning students to identify the major taxa of soil-dwelling arthropods and to aid more advanced researchers to identify families of soil mites”. The authors are to be congratulated for their efforts in producing an excellent product.

An introduction explains not only how to use this CD, but also presents a brief review of higher classification of the Acari and also methods for collecting and preparing mites for study. The later reviews published literature and presents new information based on author’s own experience.

The CD contains 5 interactive keys to 101 families of soil mites, and many higher-level taxa of soil micro-arthropods and related groups (Onychophora, Tardigrada): 1) key to 31 classes and orders of microarthropods in soil; 2) key to 31 orders, suborders, cohorts of mites in soil; 3) key to 43 families of Protostigmata in Soil; 4) key to 46 families of Parasitiformes in soil; 5) key to 12 families of Endeostigmata and Sphaerolichida in soil. It is unfortunate that a key to oribatid families is missing, but that was covered in another CD (Hunt, G., Colloff, M.J., Dallwitz, M., Kelly, J. and Walter, D.E. 1998. An Interactive Key to the Oribatid Mites of Australia. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Victoria).

The keys, although based on the Australian soil fauna, are useful for identifying classes and orders of terrestrial arthropods and most families of soil-litter inhabiting mites worldwide. As with other Lucid keys, you can start with characters easy to identify and each character state is illustrated and explained. Over 2000 line drawings, photos and colour-enhanced scanning electron micrographs are used, and many of these are new. I tested a few families of New Zealand soil mites and it took only a few steps to identify many of them. Once the end of one session is reached, plenty information is available on the morphology of the taxon, which allows you to confirm your identification. There are also information on similar species, biology and selected references for that taxon.

In generally, I find the keys easy to use and the CD an excellent tool. I highly recommend it to students of acarology and zoology.

Z.-Q. Zhang

Contents of journals**Systematic & Applied Acarology****Volume 8 (July 2003)**

GERSON, U. Acarine pests of citrus: overview and non-chemical control. 3-12

SAKUNWARIN, S., CHANDRAPATYA, A. & BAKER, G.T. Biology and life table of the cassava mite, *Tetranychus truncatus* Ehara (Acari: Tetranychidae). 13-24

MOHAMMAD H. BADII, SOSTENES VARELA, ADRIANA E. FLORES & JERONIMO LANDEROS. Temperature-based life history and life table parameters of Texas citrus mite on orange (Acari: Tetranychidae). 25-38

PALEVSKY, E., ARGOV, Y., DAVID, T.B. & GERSON, U. Identification and evaluation of potential predators of the citrus rust mite, *Phyllocoptruta oleivora*, in Israel. 39-48

SABOORI, A., HOSSEINI, M. & HATAMI, B. Preference of adults of *Allothrombium pulvinum* Ewing (Acari: Trombidiidae) for eggs of *Planococcus citri* (Risso) and *Pulvinaria aurantii* Cockerell on citrus leaves in the laboratory. 49-54

FERNÁNDEZ, H.R. Structure of water mite taxocoenoses in two northwestern Argentinean sub-tropical sub-catchments. 55-66

ZHANG, Y.-X., LIN, J.-Z., ZHANG, Z.-Q., SAITO, Y. & JI, J. Studies on the life history of *Amblyseius cucumeris* (Acari: Phytoseiidae) feeding on *Aponychus corpuzae* (Acari: Tetranychidae). 67-74

ZHANG, Z.-Q. & RHODE, B.E. A faunistic summary of acarine diversity in New Zealand. 75-84

ACUÑA, D.G., VENZAL, J.M., KEIRANS, J.E. & GUGLIELMONE, A.A. The genus *Amblyomma* Koch, 1844 (Acari: Ixodidae) in Chile, with new records of *A. argentinae* Neumann, 1904 and *A. tigrinum* Koch, 1844. 85-88

RUIZ, M.F., ORCELLET, V.M., IRIARTE, J.A., CARRERA, M. & GUGLIELMONE, A.A. The presence of *Rhipicephalus sanguineus* (Latreille, 1806) and *Amblyomma tigrinum* Koch, 1844 (Acari: Ixodidae) in southern Argentina. 89-92

VENZAL, J.M., GONZÁLEZ, E.M., CAPELLINO, D., PEÑA, A.E. & GUGLIELMONE, A.A. First record of *Amblyomma triste* Koch, 1844 (Acari: Ixodidae) and new records of *Ornithodoros mimon* Kohls, Clifford & Jones, 1969 (Acari: Argasidae) from Neotropical bats. 93-96

BOUDAGGA, H., BARBOUCHE, N., LAÂRIF, A. & HAMOUDA, M.H.B. Morphological identification of the *Varroa* species (Acari: Varroidae) colonizing Tunisian apiaries. 97-100

LIN, J.-Z., ZHANG, Y.-X. & JI, J. A new species of *Neocunaxoides* from Fujian, China (Acari: Cunaxidae). 101-106

FAN, Q.-H., WALTER, D.E. & PROCTOR, H.C. A review of the family Barbutiidae (Acari: Raphignathoidea), with the description of two new species from Australia. 107-130

DOGAN, S., AYYILDIZ, N. & FAN, Q.-H. Descriptions of two new species and a newly recorded species of *Eustigmaeus* from Turkey (Acari: Stigmaeidae). 131-144

DOGAN, S. & AYYILDIZ, N. A new species of *Ledermuelleriopsis* (Acari: Stigmaeidae) from Turkey. 145-148

YUSOF, O. & ZHANG, Z.-Q. Tetranychidae (Acari: Prostigmata) of Malay Peninsula: Checklist, key to genera and species and description of three new species. 149-173

SABOORI, A. & ARBABI, M. A new species of *Leptus* larva (Acari: Erythraeidae) from India. 175-182

WEN, T.-H. Review of the sand-mite genus *Xinjiangsha* with notes on the genus *Aboriginesia* (Acariformes: Trombiculidae). 183-191

ZHANG, Z.-Q. Systematic & Applied Acarology Volumes 1-8 (1996-2003): cumulative index to authors. 193-208

Experimental and Applied Acarology

2003, Volume 30, Issue 1-3 Special Issue: *Brevipalpus* Mites as Vectors of Unassigned Rhabdoviruses in Various Crops (**Childers, C.C. and Derrick, K.S.**)

Childers, C.C. & Derrick, K.S. *Brevipalpus* Mites as Vectors of Unassigned

Rhabdoviruses in Various Crops. 1-3

Childers, C.C., French, J.V. Rodrigues, J.C.V. *Brevipalpus californicus*, *B. obovatus*, *B. phoenicis*, and *B. lewisi* (Acari: Tenuipalpidae): a Review of their Biology, Feeding Injury and Economic Importance. 5-28

Childers, C.C., Rodrigues, J.C.V., Welbourn, W.C. Host Plants of *Brevipalpus californicus*, *B. obovatus*, and *B. phoenicis* (Acari: Tenuipalpidae) and their Potential Involvement in the Spread of Viral Diseases Vectedored by these Mites. 29-105

Welbourn, W.C., Ochoa, R., Kane, E.C & Erbe, E.F. Morphological Observations on *Brevipalpus phoenicis* (Acari: Tenuipalpidae) Including Comparisons with *B. californicus* and *B. obovatus*. 107-133

Kitajima, E.W., Chagas, C.M., Rodrigues, J.C.V. *Brevipalpus*-Transmitted Plant Virus and Virus-Like Diseases: Cytopathology and Some Recent Cases. 135-160

Rodrigues, J.C.V., Kitajima, E.W., Childers, C.C. & Chagas, C.M. Citrus Leprosis Virus Vectedored by *Brevipalpus phoenicis* (Acari: Tenuipalpidae) on Citrus in Brazil. 161-179

Childers, C.C., Rodrigues, J.C.V., Derrick, K.S., Achor, D.S., French, J.V., Welbourn, W.C., Ochoa, R. & Kitajima, E.W. Citrus Leprosis and its Status in Florida and Texas: Past and Present. 181-202

Chagas, C.M., Kitajima, E.W. & Rodrigues, J.C.V. Coffee Ringspot Virus Vectedored by *Brevipalpus phoenicis* (Acari: Tenuipalpidae) in Coffee. 203-213

Kondo, H., Maeda, T. & Tamada, T. Orchid Fleck Virus: *Brevipalpus californicus* Mite Transmission, Biological Properties and Genome Structure. 215-223

Kitajima, E.W., Rezende, J.A.M. & Rodrigues, J.C.V. Passion Fruit Green Spot Virus Vectedored by *Brevipalpus phoenicis* (Acari: Tenuipalpidae) on Passion Fruit in Brazil. 225-231

2003, Volume 30, Issue 4

Egas, M., Norde, D.-J., & Sabelis, M.W. Adaptive learning in arthropods: spider mites learn to distinguish food quality. 233-247

Marcic, D. The Effects of Clofentezine on Life-table Parameters in Two-spotted Spider Mite *Tetranychus urticae*. 249-263

Gnanvossou, D., Yaninek, J. S., Hanna, R. & Dicke, M. Effects of prey mite species on life history of the phytoseiid predators *Typhlodromalus manihoti* and *Typhlodromalus aripo*. 265-278

Kasuga, S. & Amano, H. Seasonal prevalence and susceptibility to agrochemicals of *Tyrophagus similis* (Acari: Acaridae) in spinach buds and agricultural soil under greenhouse conditions. 279-288

Jensen, P.M. & Kaufmann, U. Seasonal and diel activity of *Ixodes ricinus* (Acari: Ixodidae) subpopulations in Denmark. Aspects of size, physiological age, and malate dehydrogenase genotype in a forest site without any undergrowth. 289-303

Labruna, M.B., Fugisaki, E.Y.M., Pinter, A., Duarte, J.M.B. & Szabó, M.J.P. Life cycle and host specificity of *Amblyomma triste* (Acari: Ixodidae) under laboratory conditions. 305-316

CD-ROM Review. 317-318

2003, Volume 31, Issue 1-2

Berndt, O., Meyhöfer, R., Poehling, H.-M. Propensity towards cannibalism among *Hypoaspis aculeifer* and *H. miles*, two soil-dwelling predatory mite species. 1-14

Nomikou, M., Janssen, A. & Sabelis, M.W. Phytoseiid predators of whiteflies feed and reproduce on non-prey food sources. 15-26

Nomikou, M., Janssen, A. & Sabelis, M.W. Phytoseiid predator of whitefly feeds on plant tissue. 27-36

Skirvin, D.J. & Fenlon, J.S. The effect of temperature on the functional response of *Phytoseiulus persimilis* (Acari: Phytoseiidae). 37-49

Kavousi, A. & Talebi, K. Side-effects of three pesticides on the predatory mite, *Phytoseiulus persimilis* (Acari: Phytoseiidae). 51-58

Zhang, Y., Saito, Y., Lin, J., Chittenden, A.R., Ji, J. & Sato, Y. Ambulatory migration in mites (Acari: Tetranychidae, Phytoseiidae) to new leaves of moso

bamboo shoots. 59-70

Fernando, L.C.P., Aratchige, N.S. & Peiris, T.S.G. Distribution patterns of coconut mite, *Aceria guerreronis*, and its predator *Neoseiulus aff. paspalivorus* in coconut palms. 71-78

Kasap, A. Life history of hawthorn spider mite *Amphitetranynchus viennensis* (Acarina: Tetranychidae) on various apple cultivars and at different temperatures. 79-91

Nishimura, S., Hinomoto, N. & Takafuji, A. Isolation, characterization, inheritance and linkage of microsatellite markers in *Tetranychus kanzawai* (Acari: Tetranychidae). 93-103

Smrz, J. Microanatomical and biological aspects of bacterial associations in *Tyrophagus putrescentiae* (Acari: Acaridida). 105-113

Conyers, S.T. & Bell, C.H. The effect of modified atmospheres on the survival of the eggs of four storage mite species. 115-130

Herron, G.A. & Rophail, J. First detection of chlorfenapyr (Secure®) resistance in two-spotted spider mite (Acari: Tetranychidae) from nectarines in an Australian orchard. 131-134

Tapia-Perez, G., García-Vazquez, Z., Montaldo, H. & George, J. Inheritance of resistance to flumethrin in the Mexican Aldama strain of the cattle tick *Boophilus microplus* (Acari: Ixodidae). 135-149

Sun, Y. & Xu, R. Ability of *Ixodes persulcatus*, *Haemaphysalis concinna* and *Dermacentor silvarum* ticks to acquire and transstadially transmit *Borrelia garinii*. 151-160

2003, Volume 31, Issue 3-4

Uesugi, R., Goka, K. & Osakabe, M. Development of genetic differentiation and postzygotic isolation in experimental metapopulations of spider mites. 161-176

Castagnoli, M., Caccia, R., Liguori, M., Simoni, S., Marinari, S. & Soressi, G.P. Tomato transgenic lines and *Tetranychus urticae*: changes in plant suitability and susceptibility. 177-189

Kim, D.-S. & Lee, J.-H. Oviposition model of overwintered adult *Tetranychus urticae* (Acari: Tetranychidae) and mite phenology on the ground cover in apple orchards. 191-208

Umina, P.A. & Hoffmann, A.A. Diapause and implications for control of *Penthaleus* species and *Halotydeus destructor* (Acari: Penthaleidae) in south-eastern Australia. 209-223

Onzo, A., Hanna, R. & Sabelis, M.W. Interactions in an acarine predator guild: impact on *Typhlodromalus aripo* abundance and biological control of cassava green mite in Benin, West Africa. 225-241

Leite, G.L.D., Picanço, M., Zanuncio, J.C. & Marquini, F. Factors affecting mite herbivory on eggplants in Brazil. 243-252

Thomas, J.A. & Hein, G.L. Influence of volunteer wheat plant condition on movement of the wheat curl mite, *Aceria tosichella*, in winter wheat. 253-268

Garrido, C. & Rosenkranz, P. The reproductive program of female *Varroa destructor* mites is triggered by its host, *Apis mellifera*. 269-273

James, D.G. Toxicity of imidacloprid to *Galendromus occidentalis*, *Neoseiulus fallacis* and *Amblyseius andersoni* (Acari: Phytoseiidae) from hops in Washington State, USA. 275-281

Arzua, M., da Silva, M.A.N., Famadas, K.M., Beati, L., Barros-Battesti, D.M. *Amblyomma aureolatum* and *Ixodes auritulus* (Acari: Ixodidae) on birds in southern Brazil, with notes on their ecology. 283-296

Singh, N.K. & Ghosh, S. Experimental immunisation of crossbred cattle with glycoproteins isolated from the larvae of *Hyalomma anatolicum anatolicum* and *Boophilus microplus*. 297-314

Book Review

Hoy, M.A., *Insect Molecular Genetics: An Introduction to Principles and Applications*, 2nd edition. 315-316

Book Review

Zhang, Z.-Q., *Mites of Greenhouses: Identification, Biology and Control*. CAB International. 317-318

International Journal of Acarology**2003, Volume 29, Issue 3**

Chant, D.A. & McMurtry, J.A. A review of the subfamily Amblyseiinae Muma (Acari: Phytoseiidae): Part II. The tribe Kampimodromini Kolodochka. 179-224

Sionti, P.G. & Papadoulis, G.T. Two new species of the genus *Neocunaxoides* Smiley (Acari: Cunaxidae) from Greece. 225-229

Desch, C.E., Dailey, M.D. & Tumi, P. Description of a hair follicle mite (Acari: Demodecidae) parasitic in the earless seal family Phocidae (Mammalia: Carnivora) from the harbor seal *Phoca vitulina* Linnaeus, 1758 231-235

Cook, D.R. Three new genera and species of water mites (Acari: Hydrachnida: Hygrobatidae) from South Africa. 237-242

Okabe, K. & OConnor, B.M. Factors affecting the observed sex ratio in parthenogenetic *Schwiebea elongata* (Acari: Acaridae) in Japan. 243-250

Makino, S. & Okabe, K. Structure of acarinarium in the wasp *Allodynerus delphinalis* (Hymenoptera: Eumenidae) and distribution of deutonymphs of the associated mite *Ensliniella parasitica* (Acari: Winterschmidtidae) on the host. 251-258

Yoder, J.A. & Benoit, J.B. Water vapor absorption by nymphal lone star tick, *Amblyomma americanum* (Acari: Ixodidae), and its ecological significance 259-264

Yoder, J.A., Benoit, J.B. & Zettler, L.W. Effects of salt and temperature on the growth rate of a tick-associated fungus, *Scopulariopsis brevicaulis* Bainier (Deuteromycota) 265-269

Yoder, J.A., Benoit, J.B. & Zettler, L.W. Moisture requirements of a soil imperfect fungus, *Scopulariopsis brevicaulis* Bainier, in relation to its tick host. 271-277.

Prischmann, D.A. & James, D.G. Phytoseiidae (Acari) on unsprayed vegetation in southcentral Washington: Implications for biological control of spider mites on wine grapes. 279-287

Gwiazdowicz, D.J. Description of male of *Lasioseius ometes* (Oudemans) (Mesostigmata: Ascidae). 289-290

Pettis, J.S., Ochoa, R. & Orr, J. Interception of a live *Varroa* mite on imported cut flowers in the United States. 291-292
News 293-294
Index 295

2003, Volume 29, Issue 4

Ochoa, R., Pettis, J.S. & Mireles, O.M. A new bee mite of the genus *Pseudacarapis* (Acari: Tarsonemidae) from Mexico. 299-305

Hartini, S., Takaku, G. & Katakura, H. Macrochelid mites of the genus *Macrocheles* (Acari: Macrochelidae) in Kalimantan, Indonesia. 307-313

Sionti, P.G. & Papadoulis, G.T. Cunaxid mites of Greece 315-325

Bochkov, A.V. & OConnor, B.M. Two new species of the genus *Cheyletus* Latreille, 1796 (Acari: Cheyletidae) associated with Philippine vertebrates. 327-330

Husband, R.W. & OConnor, B.M. A new genus and species of mite (Acari: Tarsonemina: Podapolipidae) ectoparasite of the Peruvian cockroaches, *Blaberus parabolicus* (Walker) and *Eublaberus distanti* (Kirby) (Blattodea: Blaberidae). 331-338

Husband, R.W. & Husband, D.O. New records of *Crotalomorpha camini* Lindquist and Krantz (Acari: Crotalomorphidae) and a new species of *Eutarsopolipus* (Acari: Podapolipidae) parasitic on *Stenolophus (Agonodorus) lecontei* (Chaudoir) (Coleoptera: Carabidae) from the central United States. 339-344

Sakata, T. & Norton, R.A. Opisthonotal gland chemistry of a middle-derivative oribatid mite, *Archeogozetes longisetosus* (Acari: Trhypochthonidae). 345-350

Gerdeman, B.S. & Klompen, H. A new north American heterozerconid, *Narceoheterozercon ohioensis* n. g., n. sp., with first description of immatures of Heterozerconidae (Acari: Mesostigmata). 351-370

Mironov, S.V. & Perez, T.M. *Micropsittophagus* n. gen., a new feather mite genus (Astigmata: Pterolichidae) from the green pygmy parrot, *Micropsitta finschi* (Psittaciformes: Psittacidae). 371-375

Navia, D. & Flechtmann, C.H.W. A new species of genus *Adenoptus* Mitrofanov, Sekerskaya and Sharonov (Acari: Eriophyidae) from European fan palm (Arecaceae) in France. 377-380

Dogan, S. A new species and two new records of the genus *Stigmaeus* (Acari: Stigmaeidae) from Turkey. 381-387

Bridge, E.S. Densities and distributions of commensal feather mites (*Zachvatkinia caspica*) among the primaries of caspian terns. 389-398

Yoder, J.A., Domingus, J.L. & Luerman, G.C. Uric acid-induced arresstment as a possible bird host cue (Kairomone) in nymphs and adults of the lone star tick, *Amblyomma americanum* (L.). 399-402

Solarz, K. & Senczuk, L. Allergenic acarofauna of synanthropic outdoor environments in a densely populated urban area in Katowice, Upper Silesia, Poland. 403-420

News 421-422

Index 423-424

Advertisement 424

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