



Identification and host associations of some Thysanoptera Phlaeothripinae described from Australia pre-1930

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Abstract

Among Australian fungus-feeding Thysanoptera, five new synonyms are recognised in *Horistothrips* Morgan, and among leaf-feeding species, three new synonyms are recognised in *Teuchothrips* Hood and one in *Neocecidothrips* Moulton. *Horistothrips curviseta* Girault is transferred to *Neocecidothrips* as the second species in that genus and its host-plant is identified. *Cryptothrips additamentus* Karny is transferred to *Gynaikothrips* Zimmermann and identified as a common kleptoparasite in the leaf roll galls of *Gynaikothrips australis* Bagnall. A key is provided to 13 Australian species remaining in *Teuchothrips*; host-plants are recognised for six of these, but seven remain known only from their original fragmented specimens.

Keywords: *Horistothrips*, *Teuchothrips*, *Neocecidothrips*, *Gynaikothrips*, synonyms, host-plants

Introduction

The historical legacy provided to modern thrips biologists by poor descriptive taxonomy from the first half of the 20th century remains a significant obstacle to investigating the real biological diversity of these insects. Prior to 1905, only three species-group names had been proposed for any Australian thrips, but between 1905 and 1935 there was a surge by northern hemisphere workers in descriptive activity on thrips from this continent (Mound, 2004), with the erection of 320 species-group names during these 30 years. Unfortunately, most of these species were described on single individuals with no biological information, and the descriptions were superficial and sometimes no more than two to four lines. Moreover, many of the specimens were severely damaged and so imperfectly slide-mounted that suitable characters cannot be seen (Fig. 1). Progressively, these original specimens have been re-examined and compared with material derived from recent field studies, these studies being aimed at establishing host-plant relationships and developing an understanding of structural variation within and between populations of these polymorphic insects (Crespi et al., 2004). As a result, 40% of the 320 species-group names proposed prior to 1935 for Australian Thysanoptera are now considered synonyms (Mound, 1996), and this paper establishes a further nine new synonyms.

This paper is focussed on two genera whose type species were described from Australia. *Horistothrips australis* Morgan does not appear to have been re-studied since its original description in 1913, although ten species have been described in, or allocated to, the genus without any generic definition being produced. Similarly, *Teuchothrips simplicipennis* Hood has remained unstudied since the original description in 1919, although more than 40 species have been associated with this generic name. The limited objective of this paper is to establish species-level synonymies, to facilitate identification of the taxa involved, and to record host plants where these have been recognised during recent field studies. Elucidation of the systematic relationships among these thrips, particularly those associated with the name *Teuchothrips*, will require consider-