

A new genus and species of gall midge (Diptera: Cecidomyiidae) associated with *Waltheria indica* L. (Sterculiaceae)

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Abstract

Anisodiplosis waltheriae Maia, a new genus and species of Cecidomyiidae that induces galls on leaves, leaf buds, and inflorescences of *Waltheria indica* (Sterculiaceae), is described (larva, pupa, male, and female) based on material from Minas Gerais, Brazil.

Key words: Cecidomyiidae, Diptera, insect galls, Sterculiaceae, taxonomy

Introduction

In a study of the galling insects that attack plants used in land reclamation in an Atlantic forest in southeastern Brazil, we found a large number of leaf galls induced by a cecidomyiid (Diptera) on an important invasive weed, *Waltheria indica* (= *W. americana* L.) (Sterculiaceae). *Waltheria indica* represents a species of concern due to its invasive potential. It is a perennial weed that occurs mainly in the cerrado and grassland vegetation of Brazil and grows spontaneously in perennial agriculture areas, along roadsides, in pastures, and in unused plots of land (Rodrigues & Carvalho 2001, Lorenzi & Matos 2002). This species is apparently indigenous to Hawaii (Wagner et al. 1990). According to Smith (1981) and Whistler (1988), it is “a now ubiquitous pantropical weed, presumably American in origin but very early spreading to the Old World. It was probably carried into southern Pacific archipelagoes by early European voyagers, although possibly it was an inadvertent aboriginal introduction.” This weed is widespread in Brazil, where it has been recorded from Minas Gerais in southeastern Brazil to Rio Grande do Sul in the extreme south.