



Three new species of eriophyoid mites (Acari: Prostigmata: Eriophyoidea) from Montenegro

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Abstract

Three new species of eriophyoid mites from Montenegro are described and illustrated. The first, *Phytoptus alchemillae* **n. sp.** (Phytoptidae), is found on the basic rosette of leaves of *Alchemilla hoppeana* (Rchb.) D. Torre, *aggr.* (Rosaceae). The second species, *Leipothrix menthae* **n. sp.** (Eriophyidae), is located on the undersurface of *Mentha piperita* L. (Lamiaceae) leaves and the third species, *Aculus blagayanae* **n. sp.** (Eriophyidae), inhabits the receptacles of the subendemic plant species, *Daphne blagayana* Frey. (Thymelaeaceae). All three species are vagrants, causing no visible damage to their plant host.

Key words: Eriophyoidea, Eriophyidae, Phytoptidae, new species, taxonomy, Montenegro

Introduction

The superfamily Eriophyoidea includes obligatory phytophagous mites. Many of them are of a great economic importance because of the abnormalities which they induce on their host plants or the plant viruses that they are able to transmit (Oldfield and Proeseler 1996, Westphal and Manson 1996). According to Amrine *et al.* (2003) there are at least 3600 species known worldwide and each year several new genera and over a 100 new species are described. In the last decade, a European checklist has been published on-line within the Fauna Europaea project (de Lillo 2004). Although knowledge about eriophyoid geographical diversity has largely been restricted to the temperate regions of the world and a few tropical and subtropical countries, where more than 90% of known species have been found (de Lillo and Skoracka 2010), local or regional fauna (even in Europe) still remains to be investigated.

About 124 eriophyoid mite species assigned to 28 genera have been recorded from Montenegro (Petanović *et al.* 2004). In as much as the territory of Montenegro (a small country in southeastern Europe) represents one of the major parts of Europe with respect to floristic diversity (Stevanović *et al.* 1995), it stands to reason that a significantly greater diversity of Eriophyoid fauna could be expected.

In this paper, three new eriophyoid species from Montenegro: *Phytoptus alchemillae* **n. sp.** (Acari: Eriophyoidea: Phytoptidae) from *Allchemilla hoppeana* (Rchb.) D. Torre, *aggr.* (Rosaceae), *Leipothrix menthae* **n. sp.** (Acari: Eriophyoidea: Eriophyidae) from *Mentha piperita* L. (Lamiaceae) and *Aculus blagayanae* **n. sp.** (Acari: Eriophyoidea: Eriophyidae) from *Daphne blagayana* Frey. (Thymelaeaceae) are described and illustrated.

Material and methods

Plant samples were collected in North Montenegro during the spring and summer of 2004 and 2005. Mites were later collected from the plants by direct examination under the stereo-microscope using a fine needle. The mites