

Research Note

ADACTYLIDIUM SP. (ACARINA: PYEMOTIDAE, A NEW RECORD OF A PREDATORY MITE OF THRIPS EGGS IN PUERTO RICO)^{1,2}

During observations made on the population dynamics of the Cuban laurel thrips (*Gynaikothrips ficorum*)^{3,4}, an important pest of *Ficus microcarpa*, a predatory mite new to Puerto Rico was found. This mite attacks only the eggs of the Cuban laurel thrips.

Adactylidium sp. was first recorded as a predator of thrips eggs by Elbadry and Tawfik in Egypt.⁵ These workers reported that the viviparous female of this species provides additional space for the development of the ova by swelling the body enormously, a phenomenon known as physogastry. The larvae of this mite remain within the female's abdomen for 3 to 4 days. Approximately 7 to 9 sexually mature individuals only one of which is a male, emerge and aimlessly wander about in search of thrips eggs.

This mite appears to be of secondary importance as a predator of the Cuban laurel thrips eggs in Puerto Rico. Although *Adactylidium* sp. was found on 71% of the leaves I observed during a period from March to June 1977, two predatory anthocorid species were more numerous and more efficient egg feeders. In comparison, an immature stage of one of the anthocorids destroyed 20-30 thrips eggs in one day, while the mite took 3 to 4 days to destroy only one egg.

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³ Thysanoptera: Phlaeothripidae.

⁴ Abreu-Rodríguez, E., 1977. Efecto de los enemigos naturales en la población del *Gynaikothrips ficorum* . . . y observaciones sobre algunos de los simbiosites que ocurren en las hojas del árbol. Thesis submitted for the degree of Master in Science in the Dep. of Biology, at Mayagüez Campus, University of Puerto Rico.

⁵ Elbadry, E. A. and M. F. S. Tawfik, 1966. Life cycle of the mite *Adactylidium* sp. (Acarina: Phymotidae), a predator of thrips eggs in the United Arab Republic. Ann. Entomol. Soc. Am. 59: 458-461.