Zootaxa 516: 1–18 (2004)
www.mapress.com/zootaxa/

ISSN 1175-5326 (print edition)
ZOOTAXA
ISSN 1175-5334 (online edition)

516

Phytoseiid mites (Acari: Phytoseiidae) on Myrtaceae in the State of São Paulo, Brazil

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Abstract

Eighteen predatory mite species of the family Phytoseiidae are reported from three sites of the Cerrado ecosystem in the State of São Paulo, southeastern Brazil, on seven plant species of the family Myrtaceae. This paper provides a list of those species and compares relevant morphological characteristics of the specimens collected with those of the original descriptions and/ or redescriptions of the corresponding species. A key is provided to help in the separation of the species mentioned in the paper. Some of the species collected have been reported as common predators on dominant crops in the region where the work was done. Their occurrence on Myrtaceae plants found naturally in the Cerrado ecosystem indicates that those plants could represent important reservoirs of those predators.

Key words: Acari, Phytoseiidae, Myrtaceae, Cerrado, Brazil, predator, biological control

Introduction

This paper reports the phytoseiid mites collected on plants of the family Myrtaceae from three areas of the Cerrado ecosystem of the State of São Paulo, southeastern Brazil. Cerrado is the second largest Brazilian ecosystem, but it is now represented by only one fourth of its original area of occurrence (Mantovani & Pereira, 1998). Until now, a single paper specifically addresses the phytoseiids of this ecosystem (Feres & Moraes, 1998).

Leaf samples of the dominant Myrtaceae species were collected once in each season of the years 2000 and 2001 from the followings localities: Pirassununga (21º 56’ 13” S / 47º 28’ 24” W), Luiz Antonio (21º 36’ 00” S / 47º 47’ 09” W) and São Carlos (21º 54’ 47” S / 47º 49’ 12” W). The samples were taken to a laboratory, where the phytoseiid mites were collected and mounted for identification.

Accepted by Z.-Q. Zhang: 11 May 2004; published: 21 May 2004