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The sexuales of *Thelaxes suberi* (Hemiptera, Aphidoidea: Thelaxinae)

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Abstract

The oviparous female and male of *Thelaxes suberi* (del Guercio) are described and illustrated in detail for the first time. Notes on distribution, biology and host plants are presented, and keys are provided to the known sexuales of European *Thelaxes* species.

Key words: Aphidoidea, Thelaxinae, *Thelaxes suberi*, sexuales

Introduction

Thelaxes Westwood is a small Holarctic aphid genus comprising four species: *T. californica* (Davidson), *T. dryophila* (Schrank), *T. suberi* (del Guercio) and *T. valtadorosi* Remaudière. All of them are associated with various species of oaks (*Quercus* spp.).

Species belonging to this genus are characterized by a peculiar life-cycle - the immature sexuales aestivate in summer, and adult oviparae and males occur in September-November. This unusual life-cycle was described for *T. californica* by Davidson (1917) and for *T. dryophila* by Polaszek (1986). The life cycles of *T. suberi* and *T. valtadorosi* have not been described, but Polaszek (1986) collected one ovipara of *T. suberi* in a mixed colony with *T. dryophila* in England in November.

Although the oviparous female of *T. suberi* was observed during above-mentioned field study, sexuales of this species have never been properly described. During an examination of aphids in the collection of the Museum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France, single specimens of the oviparous female and male of *T. suberi* were found in a mixed colony with *T. dryophila*. They were collected by N. Tuatay in 1962 in Central Anatolia, Turkey. Species of *Thelaxes* can cause economic damage to ornamental oaks (Millar 1998; Alford 2012), and recognition of sexual morphs and knowledge of the type of life cycle is important for devising control measures, so here we present descriptions and a key to these morphs.

Material and methods

The specimens were examined using the light microscope Nikon Ni-U. Drawings were made with a camera lucida. For each of the drawings a magnified view is provided. Measurements are given in mm (Table 1). The material studied is deposited in the Museum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France (MNHN).

Thelaxes suberi (del Guercio)

(Figs 1, 2)

Tavaresiella suberi del Guercio, 1911: 299.