

Two new plant feeding mites from *Brachiaria ruziziensis* in citrus groves in São Paulo, Brazil and new distribution records of other plant mites in Brazil

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Abstract

Two new species of phytophagous mites are described from *Brachiaria ruziziensis* (Poaceae), namely *Catarhinus brachiariae* n.sp. belonging to the Diptilomiopidae, and *Eotetranychus herbicolus* n.sp. a member of the Tetranychidae. New distribution records of other plant feeding mites in Brazil are also presented.

Key words: Citrus groves, *Brachiaria*, Diptilomiopidae, Tetranychidae, distribution

Introduction

The citrus rust mite, *Phyllocoptruta oleivora* (Ashmead), is a serious citrus pest worldwide, causing considerable injury to citrus trees and fruits. It is a yellow to brownish, spindle shaped mite, with females ranging 150 to 165 micrometers long. Citrus growers recognize this eriophyid mite without any difficulty. Although no alternative host other than those belonging to the citrus fruit family Rutaceae is known (Amrine & Stasny, 1994), growers do frequently examine other plants in the citrus groves for its presence.

In the State of São Paulo *Brachiaria* grasses are lately being used in citrus groves in an intercropping system intended to provide a cover to the soil. In areas where *B. ruziziensis* Germain & Evrard is grown, citrus growers usually notice the presence of a spindle shaped eriophyid mite on the upper leaf surface of this grass, which resembles to some extent the citrus rust mite despite its larger size (ca. 210–240 micrometers) and different coloration (greyish). This resemblance leads citrus growers to believe the grass is an alternate host to the citrus rust mite (personal communication from citrus growers).