



A new species of *Rhodania* Goux (Hemiptera, Coccoidea, Pseudococcidae) and new records of two other mealybug species from Iran

D.J. WILLIAMS* & M. MOGHADDAM**

*Department of Entomology, The Natural History Museum, London SW7 5BD, UK

**Plant Pests & Diseases Research Institute, P.O. Box 19395-1414, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

Three mealybug species *Rhodania aeluropi* sp. nov., *Spilococcus alhagii* (Hall) and *Eurycoccus tamariscus* Williams are discussed and recorded from Iran for the first time. *Rhodania aeluropi* was collected on the grass *Aeluropus* sp. in sugarcane fields, and *S. alhagii*, a species already known from other countries in the Middle East, is redescribed from specimens collected in Iran. There is considerable variation in the taxonomic characters of *S. alhagii* in all the material studied.

Key words: *Rhodania aeluropi* sp. nov., *Spilococcus alhagii* (Hall), *Eurycoccus tamariscus* Williams, mealybugs, Pseudococcidae, new records, Iran

Introduction

The mealybug species discussed below have been collected recently in Iran. *Rhodania aeluropi* is a new species of *Rhodania* Goux, a Palearctic genus known only from grasses. Although it was collected on the grass genus *Aeluropus*, this was growing in sugarcane fields, and the mealybug is described here in case it is found to also infest sugarcane. Another species, *Spilococcus alhagii* (Hall), is apparently polyphagous and is known already from other countries in the Middle East but it is reported here for the first time from Iran. *Ziriphus* sp. This mealybug has also been intercepted in South Korea on pomegranate, *Punica granatum*, from Iran but, despite a search for the species in the pomegranate-growing areas in Iran, it has not been found. The characters of *S. alhagii* show wide variation in all the material examined. A lectotype of *S. alhagii* is designated from specimens collected in Egypt and the species is redescribed and illustrated from specimens collected in Iran to show differences from Egyptian material already illustrated in Ezzat (1960). A further species, *Eurycoccus tamariscus* Williams, previously known only from Pakistan on *Tamarix aphylla* and *T. indica*, is recorded now on *Tamarix* sp. from Iran for the first time.

Methods

The descriptions and records are based on slide-mounted specimens using the methods described by Williams & Granara de Willink (1992) and the terms used in the descriptions are the same as those used in Williams (2004). Body measurements are given in millimetres (mm) and measurements of all other characters are given in microns (μm). Each illustration shows the dorsum on the left and the venter on the right with enlargements of important characters around the edges. These enlargements are not drawn to scale.