



An illustrated key to the genera of Thripinae (Thysanoptera) from South East Asia

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Abstract

An illustrated key is provided for the identification of 65 genera of Thripinae from South East Asia. Wherever possible notes are given on the host-plant associations and geographical distributions, and suggestions made concerning phylogenetic relationships. The combination *Taeniothrips euophthalmos* Moulton is re-established.

Key words: Thysanoptera, Thripinae, Asia, genus, identification

Introduction

South East Asia is one of the most biologically diverse areas on earth, but there are major impediments for young Asian biologists wishing to develop an understanding of the rich fauna of their countries. The lack of identification keys to the Asian insect fauna is critical, and the library resources, also the collections of identified reference specimens, are insufficient to help a student to develop an extensive knowledge of any particular group. Electronic copying can be expected to make scientific literature more widely available, progressively. Moreover, collaborative data-basing between institutes holding extensive collections of specimens has the potential, in time, to enrich the available research base. But the development of identification keys often requires collaboration between local workers and international specialists who have knowledge of a wider fauna. The identification key presented here was developed in this way: to fill a mutual requirement; it is needed by Malaysian biologists to facilitate identification of the thrips on their crops and in their forests, and it is needed in other countries by quarantine entomologists for routine interception work.

This is the second recent publication on Thysanoptera involving collaboration between Malaysia and Australia. The first provided an identification key to 23 species of genus *Thrips* that are known from Peninsular Malaysia, together with a checklist of 78 species of Thripidae recorded from that territory (Mound & Azidah, 2009). However, the Thysanoptera fauna of Peninsular Malaysia is just part of a more extensive, but poorly documented, fauna across South East Asia. The present contribution provides an identification key to the genera of one major group, the Thripinae. The 65 genera included in this key have been recorded in, or have been intercepted in quarantine from, countries between the Indian peninsula, the Japanese archipelago, and the northern coast of Australia. For most of this area there exists no introduction to the Thysanoptera fauna, and the utility of the available key to the thrips of India (Ananthkrishnan & Sen, 1980) is severely limited due to extensive nomenclatural and synonymy changes over the past 30 years. Further east, the faunas of Japan and China include many Palaearctic elements, whereas the taxa included here are primarily those endemic to tropical and subtropical regions. Many of the taxa in this tropical fauna have extensive ranges between India in the west and Taiwan and northern Australia in the east.