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New taxa and new records of Australian Panchaetothripinae (Thysanoptera, Thripidae)

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Abstract

A new genus and species of panchaetothripine thripid, *Stosicthrips szitas*, apparently related to *Parthenothrips dracaenae*, is described from leaves of a cultivated *Grevillea* (Proteaceae) in central Queensland and also at Perth, Australia. In another genus, *Bhattithrips*, a new species *B. borealis* is described from northern Australia, and the four members of this Australian genus are distinguished in a key. A species described from Southeast Asia, *Astrothrips aureolus*, is established and probably native to northern Australia, where it damages the leaves of an *Hymenocallis* cultivar (Amaryllidaceae).

Key words: *Parthenothrips dracaenae, Bhattithrips, Astrothrips*, new species, new genus

Introduction

The Panchaetothripinae is one of the four subfamilies recognised in the family Thripidae. This subfamily comprises the thrips with strongly reticulate cuticle on body and legs, and includes *Heliothrips haemorrhoidalis*, the ubiquitous Greenhouse Thrips (Mound et al., 2001). With the description of the new genus below, 39 panchaetothripine genera are now recognised worldwide, and of these 18 are known from Australia. Four of these genera involve immigrant species from other continents: *Hercinothrips* from Africa, *Heliothrips* and *Selenothrips* from South America, and *Caliothrips* with two species from Asia and Africa, plus a third recorded in Australia only from specimens taken in quarantine on oranges imported from western North America.

Seven of the 18 genera known from Australia involve species that are probably native to this continent but that are shared with Southeast Asia (Table 1). These occur in Australia only in the tropical north, with one extending southwards into northern New South Wales. In contrast, two Old World tropical genera both include a single species considered to be endemic to Australia, *Helionothrips spinosus* in eastern Australia, and *Panchaetothrips timonii* in the far northwest (Mound, 2009). Only four of the 18 genera are clearly endemic to Australia - *Australothrips*, *Bhattithrips* and *Moundothrips*, plus the new genus *Stosicthrips* which is described below. The closest relative of this new genus is *Parthenothrips*, a monobasic genus found worldwide but possibly also Australian in origin.

Evidence is increasing for a strong relationship between the thrips fauna of northern Australia and that of Southeast Asia (Mound & Azidah, 2009; Mound & Tree, 2009). This is further emphasised by the identification recently of two more Asian species in Australia. *Helionothrips errans* (Williams), a pest of orchids, was found at Perth in Western Australia in December 2007, and then at Newcastle in eastern New South Wales in May 2008; this species is probably transported by the horticultural trade. In contrast, *Astrothrips aureolus* Stannard & Mitri appears to be widely established, and is possibly native to northern Australia. Several females of *A. aureolus* were taken separately at Darwin, Holmes Jungle, September 2009,

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