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Genera of the *Scirtothrips* genus-group (Thysanoptera, Thripidae) with a new species of *Siamothrips* from Malaysia

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Abstract

The *Scirtothrips* genus-group is here considered to comprise 11 genera, and an identification key to these is presented. These genera are *Ajothrips* Bhatti, *Anascirtothrips* Bhatti, *Biltothrips* Bhatti, *Cercyothrips* Morgan, *Drepanothrips* Uzel, *Ephedrothrips* zur Strassen, *Kenyattathrips* Mound, *Parascirtothrips* Masumoto & Okajima, *Scirtidothrips* Hood, *Scirtothrips* Shull and *Siamothrips* Okajima. One genus, *Sericopsothrips* Hood, is considered a **new synonym** of *Scirtothrips*, with the only species now referred to as *Scirtothrips palloris* (Hood) **comb.n**. A second species in the genus *Siamothrips* is described from Malaysia as *Siamothrips initium* **sp.n.**

Key word: *Scirtothrips* genus-group, key to genera, *Siamothrips* new species

Introduction

The *Scirtothrips* genus-group is here recognised as comprising 11 genera, of which 10 genera comprise a total of 18 species whereas 110 species are now listed in *Scirtothrips*. Of these genera, only *Scirtothrips* and *Anascirtothrips* are widespread globally, whereas the remaining nine genera are restricted in their distributions, five of them being monotypic. The members of this group of Thripinae breed on a wide range of plants, on which they appear to prefer tissues of the youngest leaves and fruitlets. Some species are of considerable economic importance as major pests, for example, of *Citrus* in South Africa (Gilbert 1990), of avocado in California (Rugman-Jones *et al*. 2007), and of various crops in Asia (Talekar 1991). Moreover, a few species have become widely distributed, probably through the horticultural trade, including *Scirtothrips dorsalis* and *Anascirtothrips arorai* (Hoddle *et al*. 2012), also *Biltothrips minutus* (Ng *et al*. 2014). A further example of such inadvertent dispersal is the description of *Kenyattathrips katherinae* based on specimens taken in quarantine at Melbourne, Australia, from leaves imported from Kenya (Mound 2009). Some pest species of *Scirtothrips* are highly polyphagous (Garms *et al*. 2013), but others have a more restricted host range, such as species associated with avocado in Central America (Hoddle *et al*. 2008a). Other taxa with a restricted host range include species of *Anascirtothrips* that seem to breed largely on the leaves of various *Ficus* trees, and the two species of *Ephedrothrips* that are known only from the leaves of *Ephedra* species (Ephedraceae).

Masumoto & Okajima (2007) provided a valuable introduction to the *Scirtothrips* genus-group, but excluded *Ajothrips* Bhatti on the basis of four character states. Of these, it is now accepted that the number of veinal setae among the species involved is greater than was known in 2007, and the absence of a dorsal split on tergite X of *Ajothrips garuda* is not true for all available specimens. The condition of the prospinasternum, the third character employed, is not visible in many slide preparations as this is a very weak sclerite, and is here not considered suitable for decisions on relationships. Thus, of the four character states, only the presence of campaniform sensilla on tergite IX in *Ajothrips* distinguishes this taxon clearly. The genus is therefore here included as a member of *Scirtothrips*-group, in which all species share the following character states, except where indicated: Body usually pale and small, less than 1 mm long. Antennae usually 8-segmented, but 7-segmented in six species and 6-segmented in one species; antennal segment I without dorso-apical setae, segment II with inner dorsal seta usually

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