

Research Notes

NEW RECORDS OF SCALE INSECTS ON SUGARCANE IN TAMIL NADU, INDIA (HEMIPTERA : COCCOIDEA)

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During the course of study of the coccoid pests infesting commercial hybrids of the sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum* L.) in the state of Tamil Nadu, India, the author came across a few scale insect species from new locality records. They are detailed below :

Family DIASPIDIDAE

Aspidiella sacchari (Cockerell)

This is recorded for the first time from India itself. Its occurrence has been found in the sugar factory areas of South Arcot, Tiruchirapalli, Madurai, Chengalpattu and North Arcot districts in Tamil Nadu. The population density varied from very low (insect numbers below 30 / plant), to high (more than 100 insects/plant) in these areas. Both plant as well as ratoon crops were infested by this species. Earlier it has been reported from Antigua, Barbados, Sri Lanka, Cuba, Guyana, Jamaica, Java, Mauritius, Puerto Rico, St. Croix, St. Kitts, Trinidad and Venezuela (Box, 1953; Rao & Sankaran, 1969).

Aulacaspis madiuensis (Zehntner)

Its distribution on sugarcane is known from Australia, Java, China and Taiwan on *Erianthus arundinaceum* Retz. in Sri Lanka; and on *Ipomea* sp. (Box, 1953; Rao & Sankaran, 1969; Varshney, 1985). From Tamil Nadu, in 1985, this species was reported from Tanjore district (David, unpublished), as well as it is a first record from the Chengalpattu and Trichy districts, based on the author's survey work.

Greenaspis decurvata (Green)

This species was recorded from Madurai district in Tamil Nadu earlier (Nandagopal & David, 1990). Now for the first time it has been found to occur in the districts of South Arcot, Chengalpattu and North Arcot also. Reports on its occurrence in other parts of the world are apparently wanting.

Acanthomytilus sacchari (Hall)

A native of tropical Africa, this species has been reported from Egypt and India earlier (Box, 1953; Rao & Sankaran, 1969). The author found it from sugarcane hybrids at Coimbatore. This pest was interestingly noticed only in potted sugarcane plants, under glass house conditions and could not be found under field conditions.

Family COCCIDAE

Saccharolecanium krugeri (Zehntner)

This species has been reported from Indonesia : Java (Rao & Sankaran, 1969) and from the Trichy district of Tamil Nadu, India (Williams, 1980). Its occurrence for the first time from Coimbatore has been noted by the author.

Acknowledgments: Thanks are due to the Director, Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore, for providing the necessary facilities. Sincere thanks are also due to the authorities of the different sugar factories in the various districts of Tamil Nadu, where the survey work was carried out.

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Rubber Animals for Lab

Scientists have developed 'environment friendly' artificial guinea pigs for dissection and other experiments in laboratories to prevent cruelty to animals. The animals, made from rubber, are specially designed for lab experiments in Universities. *(The Telegraph)*