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DOES THE BERMUDA GRASS MEALYBUG *CHORIZOCOCCUS ROSTELLUM* (LOBDELL, 1930) (*HOMOPTERA*: *COCCOIDEA*: *PSEUDOCOCCIDAE*) OCCUR IN ITALY?

Dr. R. MONACO of the Istituto di Entomologia Agraria of Bari, recently submitted for examination a sample of a pseudococcid collected by him in that town on *Cynodon dactylon* L. (*Gramineae*). In his opinion the species does not belong to any of those treated by LEONARDI (1920) in his monograph of the scale insects of Italy. The study of a series of fourteen mounted immature adult females disclosed that in all likelihood they are referable to *Chorizococcus rostellum* (Lobdell, 1930)(1), a species hitherto known only from North America.

This mealybug was first described from Houston, Mississippi, from specimens found on probably crabgrass [*Digitaria* sp. (*Gramineae*)] and on nut grass, a plant of the genus *Cyperus* (*Cyperaceae*). It was later recorded from Louisiana and California by FERRIS (1950; 1953). According to MCKENZIE (1967) the insect is spread all over California where it attacks many grasses, particularly *Cynodon dactylon* L. (hence the common name « Bermuda Grass Mealybug » given to it by American entomologists), as well as a few non-gramineous plants.

All specimens at hand agree well with the diagnoses and diagrams presented by FERRIS (1950)(2) and MCKENZIE (1967), except that the multilocular pores on the ventral side of the abdomen extend as far as the (iv) segment; a few oral collar ducts are intermingled with the multilocular pores situated on the ventral marginal area of the prothorax; and the dorsal oral rim ducts are slightly more numerous. About the latter ducts both authors pointed out that they are variable in number, while the former ones may have been accidentally overlooked by them, as they did in the citrus mealybug *Planococcus citri* (Risso, 1813)(3). However, before drawing any conclusion,

(1) The authorship of the species is Lodbell not Hoke. The latter was the author's maiden surname prior to 1929.

(2) They have been published under the heading of *Trionymus vallis* Ferris, 1950, which was placed in synonymy with *rostellum* by Ferris himself in 1953.

(3) McKenzie's diagram actually represents a form specifically distinct from *citri*.

the differences observed by the writer should be further investigated through a detailed study of adequate series of specimens from the two countries.

It is worth remarking that, if the presence of *rostellum* in Italy were to be confirmed, its case would be the reverse of that of *Trionymus diminutus* (Leonardi, 1918): first discovered at Bordighera, Liguria, on *Phormium tenax* L. (Agavaceae), it was subsequently found on the same host plant in Berkeley, California.

SUMMARY

The A. discusses the identity of a mealybug collected on Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon* L.) in Bari, Italy, apparently referable to *Chorizococcus rostellum* (Lobdell, 1930), a species as yet known only from North America.

SOMMARIO

L'A. discute l'identità di un Pseudococcide raccolto su gramigna (*Cynodon dactylon* L.) a Bari, apparentemente riferibile al *Chorizococcus rostellum* (Lobdell, 1930), che è tuttora conosciuto solo nel Nord America dove comunemente attacca piante erbacee.

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