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2009/193 *Scirtothrips inermis*, a thrips caught in the United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, *Scirtothrips inermis* (Thysanoptera: Thripidae) has been detected on sticky traps in a botanical garden in the South East of England. There had been 2 earlier findings of *S. inermis* in the United Kingdom, one on sticky traps in a botanical garden in 1999, and another in a different botanical garden on bay laurel (*Laurus nobilis*) in 2000. It is not known whether populations of *S. inermis* are still present at these 2 sites. Given the minute size of the insect (< 1 mm) and the difficulties of its identification, it cannot be excluded that *S. inermis* occurs in other sites but has remained undetected. *S. inermis* is reported to occur in the EPPO region in Cyprus and Spain (mainland and Islas Canarias), as well as in other parts of the world (Australia, New Zealand, and California (US)). Considering the low importance of *S. inermis* as a pest, and its known presence in Europe, no phytosanitary measures will be taken in the United Kingdom.

Source: NPPO of the United Kingdom (2009-06).

Additional key words: detailed record

Computer codes: SCITSP, GB

2009/194 *Harmonia axyridis* (Harlequin ladybird): an invasive species which continues to spread within Europe

As already reported in EPPO RS 2005/092, *Harmonia axyridis* (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) is an invasive species originating from Asia which is currently spreading in Europe, as well as in the Americas. The insect has also been reported from South Africa and Egypt (established near Cairo). *H. axyridis* has originally been released as an efficient biological control agent to limit aphid populations. However, some of these introduced populations have escaped control and are now seriously affecting the abundance of native ladybird species which are beneficial insects (e.g. *Adalia bipunctata*, *Coccinella septempunctata*). This insect can be a nuisance for humans, as it tends to aggregate in houses in autumn searching for overwintering sites. Finally, *H. axyridis* can also feed on fruits (e.g. grapes, pears, raspberries) at the end of the growing season, yield is not significantly affected but fruit quality can be reduced. Recent studies carried out in Switzerland, have shown that the presence of *H. axyridis* contaminating grapes at harvest has a negative impact on wine quality (Linder *et al.*, 2009), confirming similar observations which had already been made in the USA.

#### Situation in Europe

A special issue of BioControl entitled '*From biological control to invasion: the ladybird Harmonia axyridis as a model species*' (Roy & Wajnberg (eds), 2008) provides useful information on its current geographical distribution, invasion history, prediction for further spread, impacts and possible control measures. A paper from Brown *et al.* (2008) summarizes the invasion history of *H. axyridis* in Europe (see Table below). *H. axyridis* was sold by various biological control companies from 1995 in France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and was also intentionally released in at least 9 other countries. It has spread very rapidly, particularly since 2002, and is now regarded as established in at least 13 European countries.

- Invasion history in Europe (table adapted from Brown *et al.*, 2008).

Country	First record in the wild	Deliberately introduced (earliest year of introduction)	Evidence of establishment	Comments
Ukraine	Unknown	Yes (1964)	Unknown	-
Belarus	Unknown	Yes (1968)	Unknown	-
Portugal	-	Yes (1984)	No	Released in 1984/1985 in Algarve and Azores, but no evidence of establishment
France	1991	Yes (1982)	Yes	Widespread in Northern France
Greece	1998	Yes (1994)	Limited	Massive releases were made but only small numbers of overwintering adults could be found in Attica in spring 1998 and 1999
Germany	1999	Yes (1997)	Yes	Widespread in the Western part
Belgium	2001	Yes (1997)	Yes	Widespread
Netherlands	2002	Yes (1996)	Yes	Widespread
Spain (mainland and Islas Canarias)	2003	Yes (1996)	Yes	Few specimens found in 2006 in Pais Vasco probably originating from France or imported goods entering the nearby Bilbao airport
Switzerland	2004	Yes (1996)	Yes	Widespread in North-Western Switzerland
Luxemburg	2004	No	Yes	Widespread
United Kingdom	2004 in England 2006 in Wales	No	Yes	Widespread in England and Wales
Jersey	2004	No	Yes	Established
Italy	2006	Yes (1990s)	Yes	Probably established in North-Eastern Italy
Czech Republic	2006	Yes (2003)	Yes	Flightless strain released in hop gardens but did not establish, current populations probably spread from Germany
Austria	2006	No	Yes	Established in the West, Centre and South of Austria
Denmark	2006	No	Yes	Established in the South near Germany
Norway	2006	No	No	Recorded on imported plants in Oslo in 2006 but probably not established
Liechtenstein	2007	No	Yes	Widespread
Sweden	2007	No	No	Recorded in Malmö in April 2007 in a house but probably not established

- Additional records

Since the paper from Brown *et al.* (2008) was published the presence of *H. axyridis* has been reported from the following countries:

- Poland: *H. axyridis* was reported for the first time in 2007 in two localities (Przewozny *et al.*, 2007).
- Serbia: it was reported for the first time in 2008 in Vorovo on the territory of the National Park Fruska Gora, province of Vojvodina (Thalji and Stojanovic, 2008).
- Hungary: in February 2008, an adult male of *H. axyridis* was found near Budapest (in the city of Szigetszentmiklós). It was overwintering together with other ladybirds (*Adalia bipunctata*) under the loose bark of a declining poplar tree. Because *H. axyridis* has never been released for biological control in Hungary, it is assumed that it spread naturally from nearby infested areas, such as the Eastern part of Austria (Merkl, 2008). After this initial record, *H. axyridis* rapidly spread across Hungary where it is reported from most regions (Markó and Pozgzai, 2009).
- Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine: specimens of *H. axyridis* were collected in spring and summer 2009 from these countries (Markó and Pozgzai, 2009).

### Situation in the Americas

In North America, intentional releases began as early as 1916 in California (US) and intensified in the USA and Canada during the 1970s and 1980s. Established populations were first detected in Louisiana in 1988, and *H. axyridis* rapidly spread to most US states (with the exception of Arizona, Hawaii, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming). In Canada, *H. axyridis* occurs in the southern part of all provinces (with the exception of Saskatchewan, and in Alberta it has been detected but is not considered as established). In Mexico, it has been found in several cities in the states of Mexico, Coahuila, Jalisco, Morelos, and Puebla.

In South America, *H. axyridis* has a restricted distribution. It has been reported in Brazil (city of Curitiba, Paraná) and in Argentina (Buenos Aires), but it is considered that it has the potential to spread to more countries on this continent (Koch *et al.*, 2006).

- Source:
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Additional key words: invasive species, new records, detailed records

Computer codes: HARNAX, HU, RO, PL, RS, SK, UA

### 2009/195 First record of Grapevine flavescence dorée phytoplasma in Slovenia

In Slovenia, the presence of *Scaphoideus titanus* (Hemiptera: Cicadellidae) the vector of grapevine flavescence dorée phytoplasma (EPPO A2 List) was first noted in 1983. Until 2002, *S. titanus* was restricted to the southwestern part of Slovenia. In 2003, it was found in the northeastern part, near Maribor and Sebeborci. After 2003, *S. titanus* was caught in many new localities in the northeastern and southern parts of Slovenia and finally spread to all grapevine-growing regions of the country. For several years, grapevine flavescence dorée phytoplasma was not found in Slovenia, but in 2005 its presence was detected for the first time in a limited area close to the Adriatic coast. Phytosanitary measures (compulsory treatments against the insect vector) were taken to prevent any further spread of the disease.