

Megathrips lativentris

Distinguishing features

Female fully winged, but both sexes also micropterous. Body dark brown; femora brown with apices sometimes yellow; all tibiae and tarsi yellow, antennal segment III yellow or with apex brown, IV–VI yellow at base or basal half; fore wings pale; major setae all pale. Antennae 8-segmented, segment III with 2 slender sense cones, IV with 4 similar sense cones; VIII with narrow pedicel. Head elongate, projecting slightly in front of eyes, cheeks weakly sinuate with one pair of short stout setae behind eyes; one pair of long setae on anterior margins of ocellar triangle, 3 pairs of shorter setae on vertex

(postocellar, postocular and midvertex); maxillary stylets more than 0.5 of head width apart, retracted to about the level of mid-vertex setae.

Pronotum with epimeral sutures incomplete; major setae weakly capitate, epimeral setae about 0.5 as long as antennal segment III; prosternal basantra present, mesopresternum transverse. Fore tarsus with no tooth. Fore wing broad, parallel sided. First abdominal segment, pelta, with lateral wings triangular but only weakly joined to median lobe; tube long with prominent setae along lateral margins.

Male with no fore tarsal tooth; abdominal tergite VI laterally with paired drepanae extending beyond segment VII, tergite VIII laterally with pair of small tubercles; tube constricted in basal third, lateral margins with setae.

Related species

There are seven species listed in the genus *Megathrips*, of which five are from Europe, one from China and one from California. However, two of the species from Europe remain unrecognisable, there is doubt about the species-level status of at least one of the other species, and the distinction of *Megathrips* from the species-rich tropical genus *Bactrothrips* remains unclear (Mound & Palmer, 1983). With very few exceptions, males of these species have prominent lateral drepanae on the abdomen, and the tube bears prominent lateral setae. A large thrips species for Britain, *M. lativentris* is slightly smaller than *Bacillothrips nobilis*.

Biological data

Breeding on dead leaves, twigs and branches, and feeding on the spores of unidentified fungi on dead leaves of *Betula* [Betulaceae] and *Quercus* [Fagaceae], including in the leaf litter.

Distribution data

Apparently widespread in Britain, from Dorset to Inverness (Mound *et al.*, 1976), and a single individual has even been recovered from Bronze Age peaty silt in South Yorkshire (Kenward, 1979). Widely distributed across Europe to Asia (Mirab-balou *et al.*, 2011), and also recorded from North America (Stannard, 1968).

Family name

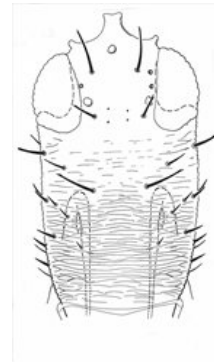
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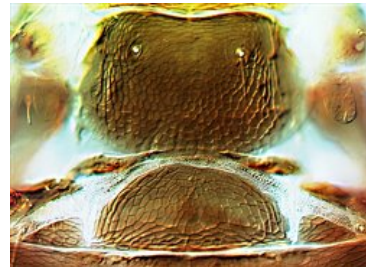
Female



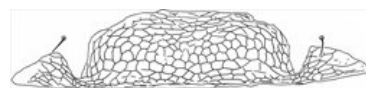
Head



Head



Metanotum & pelta



Pelta

Species name

Megathrips lativentris (Heeger)

Original name and synonyms

Phloeothrips lativentris Heeger, 1852: 479

Phloeothrips longispina Reuter, 1879: 214

Phloeothrips tibialis Reuter, 1879: 214

Megathrips piccioli Targioni-Tozzetti, 1881: 124

Megalothrips niger Schmutz, 1909: 346

Bacillothrips padewiethwi Karny, 1919: 114



Male tergites VI-IX

References

Kenward HK (1979) *Megathrips lativentris* (Heeger) (Thysanoptera: Phlaeothripidae) from Bronze Age deposits at Thorne Moor, Yorkshire. *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine* **114**: 25–26.

Mirab-balou M, Tong X, Feng J & Chen X (2011) Thrips (Thysanoptera) of China. *Check List* **7**: 720–744.

Mound LA, Morison GD, Pitkin BR & Palmer JM (1976) Thysanoptera. *Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects* **1** (11): 1–79.

Mound LA & Palmer JM (1983) The generic and tribal classification of spore-feeding Thysanoptera (Phlaeothripidae: Idolothripinae). *Bulletin of the British Museum (Natural History)*. Entomology **46**: 1–174.

Stannard LJ (1968) The thrips, or Thysanoptera, of Illinois. *Bulletin of the Illinois Natural History Survey* **29**: 213–552.