

Melanthrips fuscus

Distinguishing features

Both sexes fully winged. Body legs and antennae brown, antennal segment III slightly paler; fore wings uniformly light brown. Antennae 9-segmented; segments II–VIII with rows of microtrichia, VIII slightly longer than IX, sensoria obliquely transverse near apex of III–IV.

Head with 4 pairs of prominent postocular setae. Ocellar setae III arise on margins of ocellar triangle. Pronotum posterior margin with 5–6 pairs of prominent setae and one pair of elongate posteroangular setae. Mesonotum with microtrichia on posterior half. Metanotum with sculpture lines longitudinal to concentric, bearing microtrichia, median setae small near posterior margin. Fore tibia inner apex with a stout apical seta. Tergite VIII median setae about 0.5 as long as tergite; tergite X with paired trichobothria well developed. Sternites III–VI each with 1–3 pairs of discal setae, posterior margin of VII with pair of lobes each bearing 2 setae at the base.

Male similar to female but abdomen slender.

Related species

The family Melanthripidae was recognised as distinct by Bhatti (1990a) and withdrawn from synonymy under Aeolothripidae. The two groups had been considered closely related due to similarities in their fore wings. However, the structure of abdominal sternite VII indicates that they are not closely related. Currently the Melanthripidae comprises four genera known only from fossils, and four genera that include many species from the southern Hemisphere. In the genus *Melanthrips* there are currently 36 species listed, mostly from the Mediterranean region, with three from India, two from South Africa, and two from southwestern USA. There are about eight species in southern Europe, all with the fore wings similar to *M. fuscus* in being uniformly shaded (zur Strassen, 2003).

Biological data

Feeding and breeding in flowers of several plant species, but in Britain taken particularly in association with species of *Sinapsis* and *Brassica* [Brassicaceae].

Distribution data

Widespread and locally common in Britain (Mound *et al.*, 1976), as well as much of Europe, from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean region, and southwards to North Africa. Also known from Iran (Minaei, 2013).

Family name

MELANTHRIPIDAE

Species name

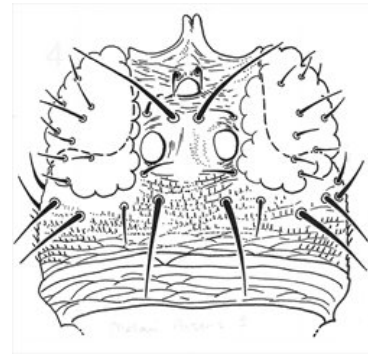
Melanthrips fuscus (Sulzer)

Original name and synonyms

Thrips fuscus Sulzer, 1776: 113

Melanthrips obesa Haliday, 1836: 450

Melanthrips harrisoni Bagnall, 1930: 48



Head



Head & pronotum



Fore wing

Melanthrips gracilicornis Maltbaek, 1931: 2
Melanthrips falcatus Melis, 1931: 79
Melanthrips contortus Melis, 1931: 102
Melanthrips cupreus Melis, 1931: 109
Melanthrips communis Melis, 1931: 112
Melanthrips communis var. *niger* Melis, 1931: 112
Melanthrips aetnaeus Melis, 1931: 118
Melanthrips lagaeniventr Melis, 1931: 119
Melanthrips minutus Melis, 1931: 122
Melanthrips elegans Melis, 1931: 124
Melanthrips inflativentris Melis, 1931: 126
Melanthrips acuminatus Melis, 1931: 128
Melanthrips siculus Melis, 1931: 135
Melanthrips bisetosus Bagnall, 1934: 485

References

- Bhatti JS. (1990a) Family group names in the Order Terebrantia (Insecta). *Zoology (Journal of Pure and Applied Zoology)* **2** (4): 185–192.
- Minaei K (2013) Thrips (Insecta, Thysanoptera) of Iran: a revised and updated checklist. *ZooKeys* **330**: 53–74.
- Mound LA, Morison GD, Pitkin BR & Palmer JM (1976) Thysanoptera. *Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects* **1** (11): 1–79.
- zur Strassen R (2003) Die terebranten Thysanopteren Europas und des Mittelmeer-Gebietes. *Die Tierwelt Deutschlands* **74**: 1–271.