

Odontothrips ulicis

Distinguishing features

Both sexes fully winged. Body and legs dark brown, mid and hind tarsi paler, fore tarsi and parts of fore tibiae yellow; antennal segment III brownish yellow, IV–VIII uniformly brown; fore wings brown with sub-basal white band. Antennae 8-segmented; segments III–IV constricted to apex, with forked sense cone; segment VI sense cone with enlarged oval base; dorsal apex of segment I with pair of setae. Head wider than long; three pairs of ocellar setae present, pair III longer than distance between compound eyes, arising on anterior margins of ocellar triangle; maxillary palps 3-segmented. Pronotum with a few sculpture lines medially, about 10 discal setae and two pairs of long posteroangular setae. Fore tarsus distal segment with no small tubercles; fore tibia apex with two prominent re-curved claws ventrally and laterally. Mesonotum with paired anterior campaniform sensilla, median setae close to posterior margin. Metanotum reticulate; median setae long, arising at anterior margin; campaniform sensilla present. Fore wing first vein with setal row almost complete but with small sub-apical gap; setal row complete on second vein, usually with more than 20 setae. Abdominal tergites with no ctenidia, median setal pair small and wide apart, II–VIII with no sculpture lines across median area; tergite VIII with posteromarginal comb with slender microtrichia laterally but none on median third, with group of microtrichia anterolateral to spiracle; IX with 2 pairs of campaniform sensilla, X with median split. Sternites without discal setae, S1 on VII arising in front of margin.

Male smaller than female; tergite IX without a pair of stout dark tooth-like processes posterolaterally; sternites without pore plates; extruded genitalia bearing 3 or 4 spines with the basal ones larger than the distal pair.

Related species

The genus *Odontothrips* currently includes 33 species. All but two of these are from the Holarctic region, including Iran and China, but one species is described from Rajasthan, India, and another from Guinea. From Europe, 19 species of *Odontothrips* are recorded (zur Strassen, 2003), with eight from Britain. Almost all *Odontothrips* species breed only in the flowers of Fabaceae (Pitkin, 1972).

Although generally similar to *loti* in colour and structure, *ulicis* is particularly similar to the specialist on broom, *cytisi*, in having the fore tibiae each with two stout recurved claws, but the males differ in the form of tergite IX and the size of the basal pair of endothecal spines on the male genitalia.

Biological data

Primarily a Spring species, and apparently specific to *Ulex europaeus* [Fabaceae]. In Britain, it is replaced on other species of *Ulex* by *O. ignobilis*. It feeds and breeds in the flowers, subsequently pupating at ground level.

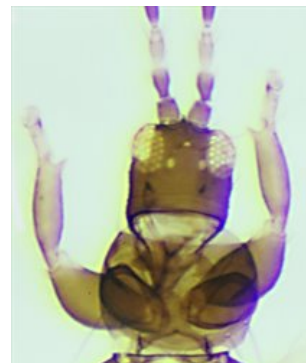
Distribution data



Female



Antenna



Head, pronotum & fore legs



Fore tibia & tarsus

In Britain known from Kent to Caithness, but has not been recorded from the English Midlands or Wales despite its relative visibility on gorse flowers. This may be a case of under-recording as targeted investigation in Yorkshire, another area where it had not previously been recorded, showed it to be common across the county (Collins, 2006). Recorded from the Republic of Ireland, but its status in Northern Ireland appears to require further confirmation (Collins, 2024). This species is also known from the Channel Islands, and is recorded widely across Western Europe and Scandinavia (zur Strassen, 2003).

Family name

THRIPIDAE - THRIPINAE

Species name

Odontothrips ulicis (Haliday)

Original name and synonyms

Thrips ulicis Haliday, 1836: 446

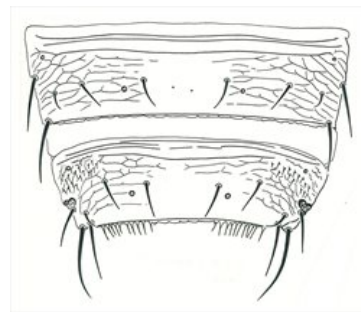
References

Collins DW (2006) *Odontothrips confusus* Priesner (Thysanoptera: Thripidae) new to Britain and recent records of other British thrips. *British Journal of Entomology and Natural History*. **19**: 145–156.

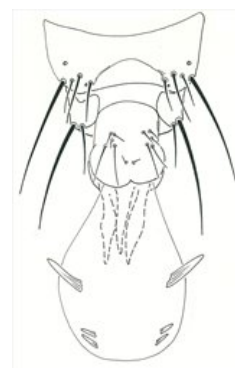
Collins DW (2024) A survey of Irish Thysanoptera in the collections of the Natural History Museum, London, with three additions to the Irish checklist. *Bulletin of the Irish Biogeographical Society* **47**: 1–24.

Pitkin BR (1972) A revision of the flower-living genus *Odontothrips* Amyot & Serville. *Bulletin of the British Museum (Natural History)* (Entomology) **26**: 371–402.

zur Strassen R (2003) Die terebranten Thysanopteren Europas und des Mittelmeer-Gebietes. *Die Tierwelt Deutschlands* **74**: 1–271.



Female tergites VII-VIII



Male tergite IX & genitalia