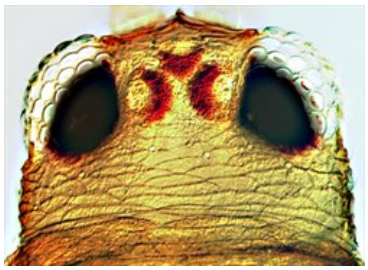
Platythrips tunicatus

Distinguishing features

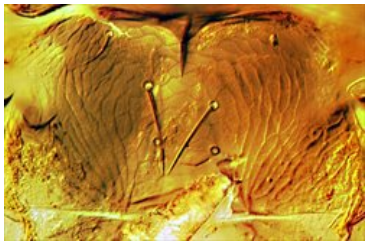
Both sexes apterous, female rarely fully winged. Body bicoloured, abdomen dark brown, head and thorax brownish-yellow, legs and antennae brown, tarsi paler; fore wings shaded. Antennae 7-segmented, segments III–IV with apices constricted, sense cone slender and forked. Head with two pairs of ocellar setae, pair III not elongate and well-separated. Pronotum with 2 pairs of long posteroangular setae, posterior margin with 2 pairs of setae. Aptera with meso- and metanota strongly transverse, and transversely reticulate; metanotal median setae far from anterior margin; campaniform sensilla present; macroptera with metanotal median setae arising far behind anterior margin, campaniform sensilla on posterior half of sclerite. Mesosternal furca with prominent spinula, metasternum without. Fore wing first vein with 1–4 setae on distal half, second vein with row of about 10 long setae. Aptera with 3 pairs of long discal setae on tergites II–VI, tergites VI–VIII each with unlobed craspedum; IX with one pair of campaniform sensilla, but these arise close together medially in front of major setal pair; X with complete dorsal split. Sternites without discal setae, S1 on VII arising in front of margin.
Male yellow, sternites III–VII with slender transverse pore plate; tergite IX without stout setae.

Female

Head & thorax



Head



Metanotum

Related species

There is only one species in the genus *Platythrips*, and this is readily recognised from its rather plump, bicoloured form. It is currently not possible to suggest any close phylogenetic relationship, *P. tunicatus* being one of the monobasic genera that did not naturally align with any of the six “genus-groups” suggested by Mound & Palmer (1981). It shares with species of the genera *Taeniothrips* and *Thrips* the absence of the first pair of ocellar setae, but it has lobed tergal and sternal craspeda unlike those genera, and lacks both the tergal ctenidia found in *Thrips* species and the posteromarginal comb of long regular microtrichia on tergite VIII of *Taeniothrips* species. Curiously, *tunicatus* shares its host plant genus *Galium* with Anaphothripine species in the genera *Rubiothrips* and *Belothrips*.

Biological data

Found on leaves and flowers of its host plants, and associated with various species of *Galium* [Rubiaceae].

Distribution data

Locally common, and recorded throughout England and Scotland from Kent to northern Scotland (Morison, 1932; Mound *et al*., 1976). Widespread in Europe, at least in the north (zur Strassen, 2003).

Family name

THRIPIDAE - THRIPINAE

Species name

Platythrips tunicatus (Haliday)

Original name and synonyms

Thrips tunicata Haliday, 1852: 1115
Thrips asperulae Jordan, 1888: 568
Platythrips tunicata var. *obscura* Reuter, 1899: 61
Bolacothrips nigricornis Bagnall, 1913: 239
Platythrips macroptera Priesner, 1920: 57

References

Morison GD (1932) Observations and records for some Thysanoptera from Great Britain. VI. *Tmetothrips subapterus* (Hal.) and *Platythrips tunicatus* (Hal.). *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine* **68**: 33–37.

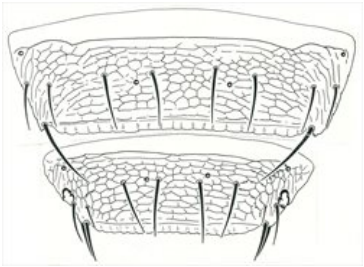
Mound LA, Morison GD, Pitkin BR & Palmer JM (1976) Thysanoptera. *Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects* **1** (11): 1–79.

Mound LA & Palmer JM (1981) Phylogenetic relationships between some genera of Thripidae (Thysanoptera). *Entomologica Scandinavica Supplement* **15**: 153–170.

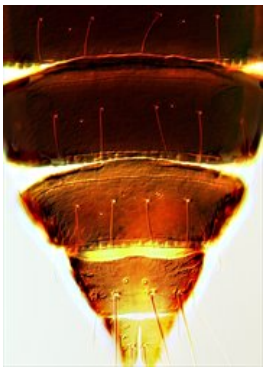
zur Strassen R (2003) Die terebranten Thysanopteren Europas und des Mittelmeer-Gebietes. *Die Tierwelt Deutschlands* **74**: 1–271.

Head & pronotum

Antenna



Tergites VII-VIII



Tergites VI-X