

Aeolothrips melaleucus

Distinguishing features

Both sexes fully winged. Body and legs uniformly brown; antennal segment III yellow, segment IV variable in colour, usually yellow in basal half with apex brown; fore wing posterior half dark from near apex to near (but not including) clavus, with two transverse dark bands that vary in length. Antennae 9-segmented, segment III slender with sensorium about 0.3 as long as segment, IV with sensorium about 0.4 as long as segment and slightly curved at apex, V–IX forming a single unit with V longer than VI–IX. Head with no long setae; eyes prolonged on ventral surface; maxillary palps 3-segmented. Pronotal posteromarginal setae not stouter than pronotal discal setae. Fore tarsus apically with stout recurved ventral hamus. Metanotum weakly reticulate. Marginal setae on sternites arising at margin; sternite VII with two pairs of accessory setae arising in front of margin. Male with paired tubercles on tergites IV–V; tergite IX with claspers not bifurcate; antennal segment II largely yellow, III with apical half shaded.

Related species

Rather more than 100 species are placed in the genus *Aeolothrips*, mostly from the Palaearctic Region but with about 30 from the Nearctic including the western USA. *A. melaleucus* is a Holarctic member of a species-group in which the fore wing has the posterior border dark in addition to two transverse dark bands. *A. versicolor* sometimes has fore wings with a similar colour pattern to *A. melaleucus*, but the head of *versicolor* is slightly prolonged in front of the eyes, and the males lack tergal tubercles and also lack claspers on tergite IX. Images under *melaleucus* in Hoddle *et al.* (2012) are presumably of misidentified *versicolor*.

Biological data

Breeding on the leaves and flowers of various trees as a predator of mites and thrips larvae. This species is taken commonly in Europe on the leaves of *Quercus* (Fagaceae), *Fraxinus* (Oleaceae), and other deciduous trees (zur Strassen, 2003), but sometimes also in the flowers of *Sambucus nigra* (Caprifoliaceae).

Distribution data

Not common in Britain and recorded mostly from southern England, although it has been found on the western side of England as far north as Cumbria, and also from York (Collins, 2006). It has also been taken in Aberdeenshire (Mound *et al.*, 1976). It is widespread across the northern hemisphere, including Europe, Iran, Canada, and northern USA into Montana, Washington, and Oregon (Stannard, 1968).

Family name

AEOLOTHRIPIDAE

Species name

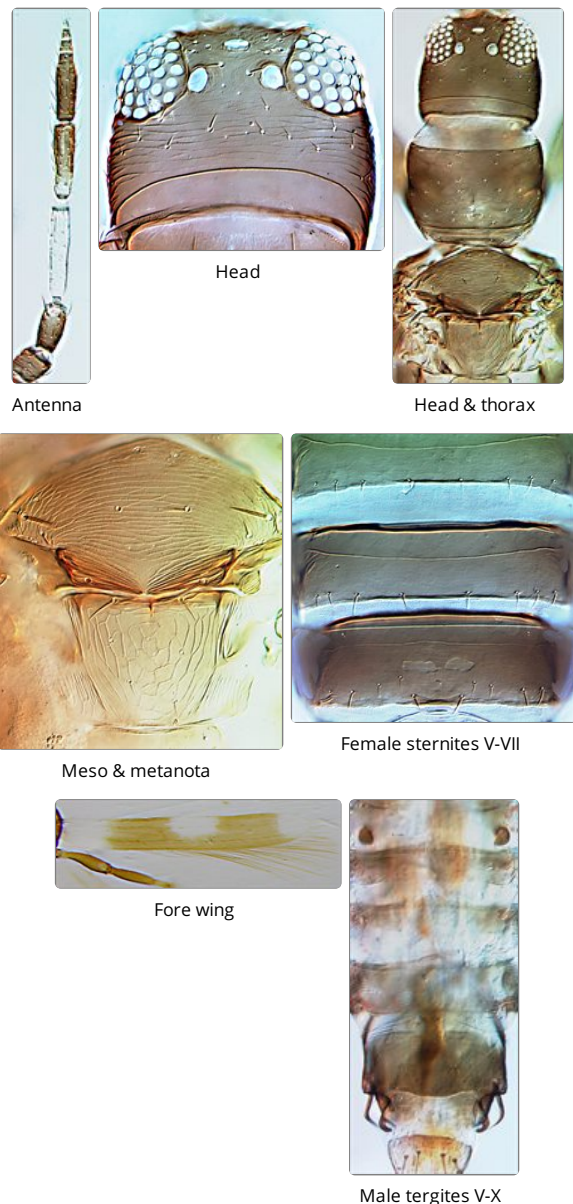
Aeolothrips melaleucus Haliday

Original name and synonyms

Aeolothrips (*Coleothrips*) *melaleuca* Haliday, 1852: 1117
Aeolothrips fasciatus var. *coniunctus* Priesner, 1914: 259
Aeolothrips annectans Hood, 1916: 109
Aeolothrips coniunctus adustus Priesner, 1920: 51
Aeolothrips concinus Ishida, 1931: 32
Aeolothrips uzeli Bagnall, 1934: 482

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.



Hoddle MS, Mound LA, Paris DL (2012) *Thrips of California* 2012. CBIT Publishing, Queensland.
http://keys.lucidcentral.org/keys/v3/thrips_of_california/Thrips_of_California.html

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

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

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