

# Sophiothrips aleurodisci

## Distinguishing features

Female rarely fully winged, usually apterous. Body brown, head pale between eyes; antennal segment I, basal half of II–V, tube, base of tibiae, and parts of femora yellow; major setae brown; fore wings (when present) shaded. Head wider than long, produced in front of eyes; cheeks constricted behind eyes and at base; ocelli well developed in macropterae; ocellar setae long, acute; 2 pairs of acute major postocular setae, median pair well behind eyes, lateral pair almost on cheek; maxillary stylelets very short, restricted to mouth cone. Antennal segments VII and VIII closely joined; III and IV each with 2 slender sense cones, on III not extending to mid-point of segment IV. Pronotum sculptured near posterior margin; major setae acute; anteroangular setae shorter; basantra small. Mesopresternum slender, transverse, entire. Metanotum elongate, reticulate medially, with a pair of finely pointed median setae. Fore tarsal tooth small. Fore wing major sub-basal setae acute, S3 longest, S2 lying posterior to S1. Pelta bell-shaped, sculptured; tergites III–VII each with 1 pair of sigmoid wing-retaining setae; tergite IX posteromarginal setae pointed, S1 longer than S2, tube shorter than head, constricted at apex; anal setae short; sternites with about 8 discal setae. Female aptera variable in size; ocelli absent; basantra sometimes absent; mesonotum broadly transverse, with lateral tubercle bearing a stout seta; mesopresternum represented by a thin, broken line; metanotum transverse, partly fused to mesonotum, at least laterally; pelta rectangular, sometimes with margins weakly eroded, bearing 2 small lateral lobes; abdominal segments II–IV with tergites much shorter than sternites; tergites III–VII each with 1 pair of very small, straight wing-retaining setae.

Male similar to female aptera, tergite IX setae S2 scarcely half as long as S1; fore tarsal tooth larger, recurved. Large males with a greatly enlarged fore tarsal tooth and swollen fore femora; head longer than wide, often with a ventral tubercle between eyes; setae on head and pronotum long, slender; pronotum enlarged; tergite IX often with a small, blunt tubercle between posteromarginal setae.

## Related species

The genus *Sophiothrips* comprises 31 species worldwide. Five of these are endemic to Australia, with one of these five also in New Zealand. Three further species constitute the *duvali*-group in which antennal segment III bears 2 sense cones instead of just a single sense cone. One of these three species is known only from Norfolk Island, but the other two are endemic to New Zealand (Mound & Tree, 2014). *S. aleurodisci* differs from the related species *S. duvali* in the form of the pelta, the shorter antennal sense cones, and the smaller tubercle on tergite IX of large males.

## Biological data

Found living on dead twigs in association with a coral-spot fungus (*Aleurodiscus* sp.).

## Distribution data

Known only from New Zealand (AK, CL / NN, BR).

## Family name

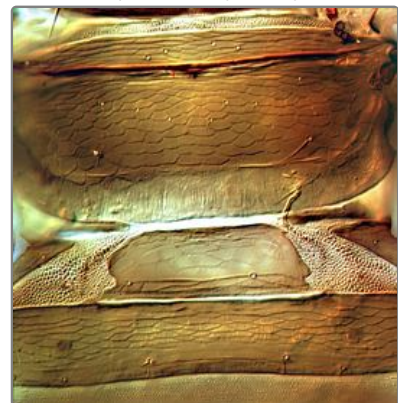
PHLAEOTHIRIPIDAE, PHLAEOTHIRIPINAE



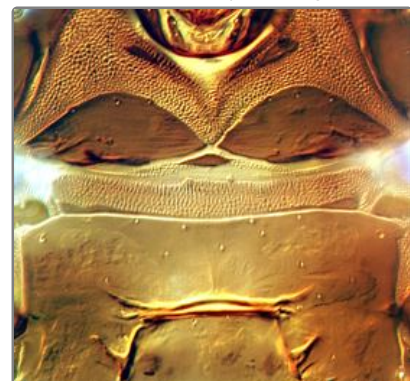
Antenna



Head & pronotum - stylets very short



Meso & metanotum, pelta & tergite II



Thoracic sternites

## Species name

*Sophiothrips aleurodisci* Mound & Walker

## Original name and synonyms

*Sophiothrips aleurodisci* Mound & Walker, 1982: 349

## References

Mound LA & Tree DJ (2014) The minute, fungus-feeding species of *Sophiothrips* (Thysanoptera, Phlaeothripinae) from Australia and New Zealand. *Zootaxa* **3860** (2): 184–194.

Mound LA & Walker AK (1986) Tubulifera (Insecta: Thysanoptera). *Fauna of New Zealand* **10**: 1–140.