Oligonychus araneum Davis 1968

Material examined

types

Taxonomy

Subfamily Tetranychinae

Tribe Tetranychini

Distribution

*Australia: south eastern Queensland, New South Wales

Taxonomy Changes

None

Diagnosis

Female (Fig. 1)

- empodia I-IV long slender claw (Fig. 2)
- pregenital striae oblique, irregular (Fig. 3)
- peritreme ending in simple bulb with little or no expansion (Fig. 4)
- most dorsal striae transverse, except irregular longitudinal and oblique between opisthosomal setae f1 and f2 (Figs 5, 6)
- lobes on dorsal striae small, semicircular, some almost oblong, closely spaced (Fig. 6)
- lobes on ventral striae small, rounded, widely spaced
- tarsus I with the sockets of four tactile setae proximal to the socket of the proximal duplex seta (Fig. 7)
- chaetotaxy of legs I-IV (bold numbers are considered the normal value):
  - femora 10, 6, 3/4, 3/4
  - genua 5, 5, 4, 4
  - tibiae 9-10(1+0), 6-7, 6, 7
- pale green or yellowish with dark spots along sides of body
- copious webbing produced

Male

- empodium I = bifid claw, ventral spur longer than dorsal spur (Fig. 8)
- empodia II-IV with dorsal claw shorter than proximoventral hairs (Figs 8, 9)
- peritreme ending in simple bulb with little or no expansion (Fig. 10)
- tarsus I with sockets of four tactile and two-three sensory setae proximal to the socket of the proximal duplex seta
- chaetotaxy of legs I-IV:
  - femora 10, 5, 4, 4
  - genua 5, 5, 4, 4
  - tibiae 12-13(3-4+0), 7 -8, 6, 7
  - aedeagus dorsally directed, abruptly bent dorsally, tapering, very tip curved posteriorly (Fig. 11)

Hosts

*Cynodon dactylon, *Digitaria didactyla, *Pennisetum clandestinum,
*Stenotaphrum secundatum (Poaceae)

Similar Taxa
**Oligonychus digitatus** Davis 1966

**Oligonychus plegas** Baker & Pritchard 1960

**Oligonychus velascoi** Rimando 1962

**Biology**

Recorded as a pest of grasses in eastern Australia. *Oligonychus araneum* can occur in very large populations that cause yellowing of grass in a ring-shaped area as the colony grows and spreads outwards from the initial infestation which turns brown (Davis 1968). The species spins copious amounts of webbing.

*Oligonychus araneum* often occurs with *O. digitatus*.

**References**

*Davis, J.J. (1968d).* Oligonychus araneum sp. n. and Oligonychus digitatus Davis (Acarina: Tetranychidae) as pests of grasses in eastern Australia. *Journal of the Australian Entomological Society* 7: 123-126

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Fig. 11. Oligonychus araneum adult male - detail of aedeagus (arrow indicates curved tip).