

Merothrips floridensis



Distinguishing features

Female apterous or macropterous; antennae 8-segmented, III and IV with transversely oval sensorium; Head smaller than pronotum, vertex with pair of long ocellar setae; compound eyes with 7–9 facets. Pronotum trapezoidal, posterior area with some weak sculpture lines; paired longitudinal sutures laterally, one pair of long posteroangular setae. Mesonotum, metanotum and tergites with faint sculpture lines. Tergite IX median setae longer than sub-median pair; tergite X trichobothria larger than spiracle on tergite VIII, axial seta as long as tergal major setae. Female macroptera with large compound eyes; fore wing second vein extending basad from cross vein.

Male apterous, vertex developed as extensive pore plate; antennal sensoria smaller than those of female; fore legs enlarged in large males, with pointed tubercle at inner apex of tibia; mesonotum, metanotum and tergites with several transverse lines of sculpture.

Related species

The genus *Merothrips* currently comprises 15 species, most being from the Neotropics (Mound & O'Neill, 1974), with a further three species known only from fossils (ThripsWiki, 2020). The trichobothria on tergite X are considerably larger in *M. floridensis* than in *M. brunneus*. Apterous females of *floridensis* are paler than apterae of *brunneus*, the compound eyes usually have only 7–9 facets, and the sensorium on antennal segment III is clearly transverse not circular.

Biological data

Fungus feeding, and breeding on dead leaves and dead branches; sometimes producing large populations

Distribution data

Described from Florida, this species has been recorded widely around the world, including U.S.A. (Florida, Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, California) Bermuda, Panama, Trinidad, Colombia, Brazil, Azores, France, Japan, Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia (Queensland, New South Wales, A.C.T., South Australia).

Family name

MEROTHRIPIDAE

Species name

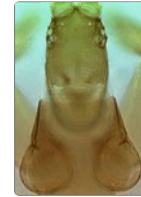
Merothrips floridensis Watson

Original name and synonyms

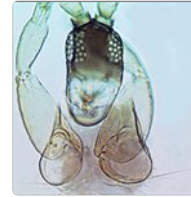
- Merothrips floridensis* Watson, 1927: 60
- Merothrips capensis* Faure, 1938: 6
- Merothrips plaumanni* Crawford, 1942: 150
- Merothrips xylophilus* zur Strassen, 1959: 447
- Merothrips priesneri* Bournier, 1960: 98
- Merothrips zondagi* Ward, 1969: 359



Apterous female



Head & pronotum (wingless female)



Head and pronotum (winged female)



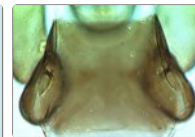
Male head & pronotum



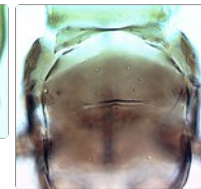
Antenna



Antenna



Pronotum



Mesonotum & metanotum



Sternite VII with lobes of VIII



Fore wing

References

Mound LA & O'Neill K (1974) Taxonomy of the Merothripidae, with ecological and phylogenetic considerations (Thysanoptera). *Journal of Natural History* **8**: 481–509.

ThripsWiki (2020) *ThripsWiki - providing information on the World's thrips*. Available from: http://thrips.info/wiki/Main_Page [accessed 29.x.2019].