

Franklinothrips vespiformis

Distinguishing features

Both sexes fully winged, female with a wasp-like waist. Body, legs and antennae largely brown, but abdominal segments II–III sharply yellow except for anterior margins, segment X yellowish, antennal segments I–III yellow, all femora with apices often yellowish; fore wing banded, brown with a small sub-basal pale area, a broad median pale area, and an indistinct sub-apical spot. Antennae 9-segmented, unusually elongate, segment III about eight times as long as wide with long sensory area formed of irregular scallops. Head broadly recessed into anterior margin of pronotum. Metanotum with no sculpture medially, one pair of setae at anterior margin and one pair near posterior. Fore wing slender with apex rounded. Sternites IV–VI each with two pairs of marginal setae and two pairs of setae laterally on discal area.

Related species

Currently 16 species are listed in the genus *Franklinothrips*, all from tropical and subtropical countries, but more undescribed species are known from Southeast Asia (Mound & Reynaud, 2005). Particularly similar in structure to *F. vespiformis* is the Central American species *F. orizabensis*, but that has the fore wings rather broader at the apex and without a pale sub-apical area.

Biological data

In contrast to *F. orizabensis*, usually found on low growing plants rather than trees and shrubs. Adults and larvae are predatory on the larvae of other thrips species. The oviposition behavior and the production by larvae of a silken pupation cocoon have been described by Araraki and Okajima (1998). Males appear to be rare (Tyagi *et al.*, 2008).

Distribution data

Presumably originally from South America or the Caribbean region, but now recorded widely around the world, including USA (Arizona, California, Texas, Florida), many Caribbean and South American countries, India, Thailand, Japan, Fiji, Galapagos Islands, New Caledonia, and Australia (Queensland & northern Western Australia).

Family name

AEOLOTHRIPIDAE

Species name

Franklinothrips vespiformis (Crawford DL)

Original name and synonyms

Aeolothrips vespiformis Crawford DL, 1909: 109

References

Arakaki N & Okajima S (1998) Notes on the biology and morphology of a predatory thrips, *Franklinothrips vespiformis* (Crawford) (Thysanoptera: Aeolothripidae): First record from Japan. *Entomological Science* 1: 359–363.

Mound LA & Reynaud P (2005) *Franklinothrips*, a pantropical Thysanoptera genus of ant-mimicking obligate predators (Aeolothripidae). *Zootaxa* 864: 1–16.

Tyagi K, Kumar V, Mound LA (2008) Sexual dimorphism among Thysanoptera Terebrantia, with a new species from Malaysia and remarkable species from India in Aeolothripidae and Thripidae. *Insect Systematics and Evolution* 39: 155–



