

PEST ALERT

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry
Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner of Agriculture

A Bamboo Mealybug *Palmicultor lumpurensis* (Takahashi) Coccoidea: Pseudococcidea

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INTRODUCTION: Division of Plant Industry inspector Barbara Wilder collected this new Continental US Record on August 12, 2002 in Lake Buena Vista, Orange Co. The host plant was *Bambusa oldhamii* Munro. Since that date, surveys have found additional infestations of this mealybug on *Bambusa* sp. 'Ole Hammi.' The following information was summarized from Takahashi 1950 and Ben Dov 1994.

DESCRIPTION: Adult and immature stages of this mealybug are grayish-pink to red in color. Individuals lack lateral wax filaments and are covered by a fine white mealy wax (Fig. 2, Fig. 3). Mealybugs are found beneath sheaths of bamboo. Slight to moderate infestations may not be easily recognized. Once populations explode, infestations are easy to spot with large amounts of white wax being visible on the external portions of the leaf sheaths (Fig. 1).

SIMILAR MEALYBUGS: This mealybug superficially resembles the pink hibiscus mealybug by having a pinkish body and lacking lateral wax filaments. It should be noted that bamboo is not a host for the pink hibiscus mealybug.

BIOLOGY: There is very little known about the biology of this mealybug species. The original description of this insect in 1951 listed no biological data. This mealybug is native to warm climates and like many mealybugs, it will more than likely have multiple generations throughout a given year.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE: It is impossible to predict the overall economic significance of this pest on bamboo at this time. Heavy infestations of this mealybug have the potential to cause an abortion of new shoots.

DISTRIBUTION: This bamboo mealybug is recorded from two regions--**Australasian:** Australia (personal communicate with Dr. Doug Miller USDA-ARS); **Oriental:** Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam--and in **Florida** where the only known infestations are in Orange County.

REFERENCES:

- Ben Dov, Y.** 1994. *A systematic catalogue of the mealybugs of the world. Intercept unlimited. 686 p.*
Takahashi, R. 1950. *Some mealybugs (Pseudococcidae: Homoptera) from the Malay peninsula. The Indian Journal of Entomology, Vol. XII (1): 12-15.*

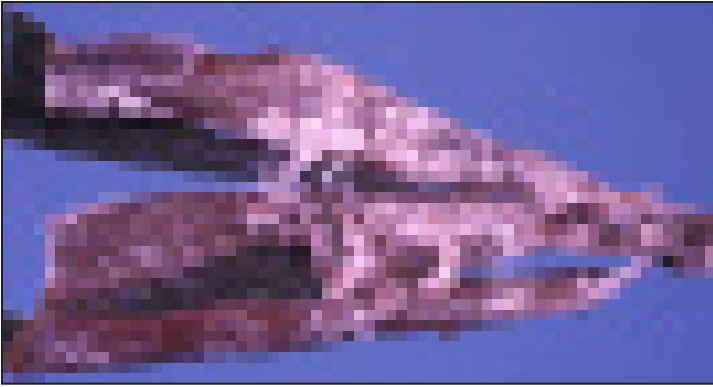


Fig. 1. Infested bamboo showing mealy wax.
Photo credit: Jeffrey Lotz, FDACS-DPI



Fig. 2. *Trionymus lumpurensis* with mealy wax.
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Fig. 3. Adult female of *Trionymus lumpurensis*.
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