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BRIEF COMMUNICATION

RECORD OF WAX SCALE *CEROPLASTES FLORIDENSIS* COMSTOCK (HOMOPTERA: COCCIDAE) INFESTING CLOVE SEEDLINGS IN KERALA, INDIA[1]

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Ceroplastes floridensis **Comstock (Homoptera : Coccidae) has been recordef for the first time infesting clove seedlings in Kerala, India.**

(*Key words:* wax scale, *Ceroplastes floridensis*, clove, *Eugenia caryophyllus*)

Among the insect pests recorded on clove (*Eugenia caryophyllus* (Sprengel) Bullock *et* Harrison) in India, scale insects are important pests especially on seedlings and younger plants. The various species recorded on the crop include *Parasaissetia nigra* (Nietner) (ABRAHAM *et al.*, 1970), *Mycetaspis personata* (Comstock) (NAIR *et al.*, 1977) *Lecanium psidii* (ANONYMOUS, 1981) and *Pulvinaria psidi* Maskell (VISALAKSHI *et al.*, 1981). During March 1985 infestation of the wax scale *Ceroplastes floridensis* Comstock (Homoptera : Coccidae) on 2 year old seedlings of clove in the nursery at the farm of the National Research Centre for Spices at Peruvannamuzhi (Calicut district, Kerala). This is recorded on clove for the first time.

The scales were observed on tender shoots and lower surface of tender leaves. The infested leaves became discoloured, wilted and dropped; when control measures were not undertaken some of the seedlings wilted and died. In a sample of 1162 plants observed on 12th March 1985, 11.7 percent of them were infested. The mature scales were oval, convex and greyish white with a waxy plate and measured 2.62×1.83 mm (n = 5) (Fig. 1). Eggs were observed under some of the scales and they were oval and measured 0.29 × 0.16 mm (n = 5).

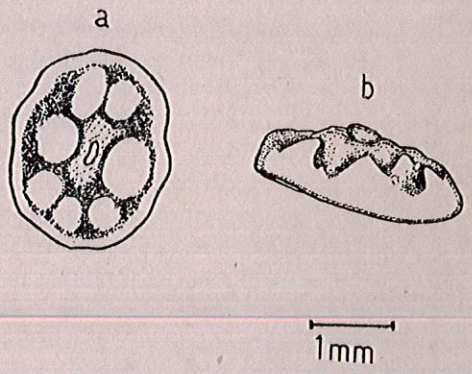

Fig. 1. Adult of *Ceroplastes floridensis* (a. dorsal view b. lateral view).

C. floridensis is a well known polyphagous pest in India occurring on fruit trees like apple, citrus, custard apple, fig, guava, mango and other crops such as cashew, okra and tea (NAIR, 1975; BUTANI, 1979). The pest infestation could be controlled by spraying monocrotophos 0.05 percent.

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