

## SHORT COMMUNICATION

# First record of the mealy plum aphid *Hyalopterus pruni* (Geoffroy), (Homoptera, Aphidoidea) in Madeira Island

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During a scientific expedition to Madeira Island organized by the Department of Biology of the University of the Azores, in September 1997, for studying coccinellids associated with some crops, the second author (A.O. Soares) collected 14 aphid samples, one of them containing the mealy plum aphid, *Hyalopterus pruni* (Geoffroy, 1762), a species until then unknown in the archipelago of Madeira and a potential threat to some *Prunus* crops. The first author (F.A. Ilharco) considers *Hyalopterus amygdali* (Blanchard) a possible synonym of *H. pruni*. In Macaronesia, *H. pruni* is already known in Canary islands (Nafria et al. 1977), and van Harten (1993) reported it from Cape Verde islands. It is a cosmopolitan aphid species, with *Prunus* trees as primary hosts and the gramineous *Arundo donax* L. and *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Steudel (= *P. communis* Trin.) as secondary hosts. In Madeira Island it was collected on *Arundo donax* on 26 September 1997 in Santana, Fajã da Rocha-do-Barco. In continental Portugal, *H. pruni* is a common species, either on primary hosts or *Arundo* and *Phragmites*. A large population was also seen on cultivated bamboo (Ilharco, 1996).

On *Prunus* trees *H. pruni* lives in large colonies on the underside of leaves, excreting

abundant honeydew. On secondary host plants the aphid lives on the upper surface of leaves (Fig. 1), frequently forming also large colonies. The aphids are green on *Prunus* but green or red on *Arundo* or *Phragmites*, with the body covered by wax powder. They are not visited by ants.

Other aphid species collected by the second author during this expedition to Madeira Island:

*Acyrtosiphon pisum* (Harris) – vagrant, Seixal

*Aphis fabae* Scopoli - vagrant, Faial

*Aphis gossypii* Glover - on *Hibiscus* sp., Funchal

*Aphis spiraecola* Patch - vagrant, Faial

*Brevicoryne brassicae* (Linné) – on *Brassica oleraceae* L., Santana

*Cavariella theobaldi* (Gillette & Bragg) – on *Salix* sp., Camacha and Levada da Serra

*Rhopalosiphum maidis* (Fitch) - on *Zea mays* L., Santo da Serra



Fig. 1. *Hyalopterus pruni* on *Phragmites australis* (by F.A. Ilharco)

*Rhopalosiphum padi* (Linné) - on *Zea mays*,  
Santo da Serra and Curral das Freiras

*Sitobion avenae* (Fabricius) - vagrants, Porto  
Moniz, Faial and Seixal

*Uroleucon sonchi* (Linné) - on *Sonchus* sp.,  
Quinta Grande; vagrants, Seixal and Faial

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