First record of Aleurolobus olivinus (Silvestri) (Hemiptera: Aleyrodidae) in Malta

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In recent years there have been a number of faunistic studies on the whitefly fauna of the Mediterranean Basin. A total of 56 species accommodated within 25 genera were recorded from Europe and countries bordering the Mediterranean Basin (Martin et al., 2000). The whitefly fauna of the Maltese Islands was thoroughly investigated with 13 species recorded (Mifsud, 1995; Mifsud & Palmieri, 1996). Mifsud (1995) suggested that other whitefly species could eventually be found in Malta mainly due to their typical Mediterranean distribution and availability of their host plant/s. One such species, Aleurolobus olivinus (Silvestri), was recently collected in Malta and it thus represents a new record for this country.

The identification of this species was based on examination of pupal cases under a compound microscope and the following dichotomous keys were used: Martin et al., 2000; Mifsud, 1995 and Mifsud & Palmieri, 2000.

Aleurolobus olivinus (Silvestri, 1911)


Aleurolobus olivinus (Silvestri) is a typical Mediterranean species being recorded from the following territories: Corsica, Crete, Cyprus, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Mallorca, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Sardinia, Sicily, Spain, Syria, and Turkey. The species is mainly found on oleaceous hosts (Olea europaea, Phillyrea angustifolia and Phillyrea latifolia) but it has also been recorded from Erica (Bink-Moenen, 1989). Occasionally, A. olivinus (Silvestri) becomes a minor pest of olives, however, the species is well controlled by a number of natural enemies, namely parasitoids (Maniglia, 1985). Generally, A. olivinus (Silvestri) goes through one generation per year with adults appearing in June and July; in western Sicily, however, two generations per year were recorded with adults emerging in June-July and again in September-October (Maniglia, 1985).

REFERENCES


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