SURVEY OF SCALE INSECTS, MEALY BUGS AND ASSOCIATED NATURAL ENEMIES ON MULBERRY TREES IN THE NILE DELTA

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Abstract

Sampling of two mulberry tree species namely Morus alba L. and M. nigra L. was conducted from January 2011 to December 2012 to determine the arthropod pests attacking the trees, and their associated natural enemies at Delta region. Two arthropod classes were recorded during the present study (Insecta and Arachnida). Scale insects (Asterolecanium pustulans (Ckll.), Ceroplastes rusci L., Coccus hesperidum L., Saissetia oleae (Bern.), pentagona Pseudaulacaspis (Tarq.-Tozz.), Hemiberlesia lataniae Signoret) and mealy bugs (Icerya aegyptiaca (Dough), Icerya purchasi Maskell, Icerya seychellarum (Westw.), Ferrisia virgata (Ckll.), Planococcus citri (Risso), Maconellicoccus hirsutus (Green)) were surveyed as major insect pests. The minor ones were accounted for 24 species (including insects and mites). The parasitoids associated with scale insects and mealy bugs were arranged in five families, Aphytis spp., Encarsia citrina (Crawford), Anagyrus kamali Moursi, Metaphycus sp., Allotropa mecrida (Walker), Scutellista caerulea (Fonscolombe) the most occurring. As for predators, 31 insect species and 9 spiders were found associated with the two pest categories. The predatory mites were identified as two species, which regulate the spider mites. Population fluctuations of mulberry mealy bug, Maconellicoccus hirsutus (Green) were found related to the population fluctuation of Nephus bipunctatus.

INTRODUCTION

Mulberry, *Morus alba* L. (Moraceae) is a widespread and important fruit tree. It is also used for silkworm feed, and a source of woods in many parts of the world including Egypt. In temperate and sub-tropical climates, mulberries are deciduous, under tropical upland conditions they are in leaf throughout the year (FAO, 2002, and Govindaiah, *et al.*, 2005).

Sericulture is the most important commercial use for white mulberry. Qualitative and quantitative leaves can only ensures quality cocoon and quality silk (Govindaiah, et al.,2005). Morus alba is attacked by many pests (Sanchez, 2000 and Rama and Kumar 2007). The mulberry M. alba and M. nigra are cultivated in Egypt around the roads, houses and farms, many local trees scattered all over the Egyptian country

side. The mulberry trees have not any protection, pruning and fertilizer treatments. Many mites, insect pests cause a problem on shoots and leaves. Incidence of these pests in around the Egyptian area is unknown.

As the authors aware, no studies were conducted on insect pests of mulberry trees in Egypt. However, Hosny *et al.*(1976), in a text book, mentioned that mulberry trees as a wood tree are attacked by some insect pests, the Egyptian mealy bug, *Icerya aegyptiaca* (Douglas), the pink hibiscus mealy bug, *Maconellicoccus hirsutus* (Green), the fig wax scale *Ceroplastes rusci* (L.), the pit-making scale, *Asterolecanium pustulans* (Ckll.), the Egyptian cotton leafworm, *Spodoptera littoralis* (Boisd.), the large brown longhorn beetle *Macrotoma palmata* (F.) and the longhorned beetle, *Rhaesus serricollis* (Motschulsky). Attia, (2012) recorded striped mealy bug, *Ferrisia virgata* (Cockerell) on *Morus alba* in Cairo and Giza Governorates parasitized by *Blepyrus insularis*.

Mulberry mealy bug, *Maconellicoccus hirsutus* (Hemiptera: Pseudococcidae) infestation of white and black mulberry causes malformation of terminal buds and appearance of small curly leaves on the shoots and top apical. *M. hirsutus* is a serious polyphagous pest feeding voraciously on mulberry leaves (Manjunath *et al.*, 2006, Mala *et al.*, 2007). The pest has been found on 215 genera of plants. Its wide host range favors rapid and complicated effective control. A heavy black sooty mold sometimes develops on infested leaves and stems as a result of the mealy bug heavy secretion was described by Alleyne, (2004). *M. hirsutus* was considered an economic pest in many of the tropical and semi tropical regions of the world (CABI/EPPO, 2004). Many Egyptian studies have addressed the natural enemies of scale insects and mealy bugs (Hendawy 1999, Abd-Rabou and Hendawy 2000, Mousa *et al* 2001, Hendawy *et al* 2002, Abd-Rabou and Hendawy 2005). The current study aimed to survey the local pests attacking the mulberry trees and their natural enemies in Delta Region of Egypt.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Surveys were carried out at Delta region (Kafr El-Sheikh and Gharbia governorats) from January 2011 to December 2012 on mulberry trees, *Morus alba* L. and *M. nigra* L. to determine the arthropods attacking these trees and their natural enemies. The trees aged 3 -10 years old and scattered in plantations of annual crops (rice, maize, cotton, soybean, bean, clover, sugar beet, flax and wheat), around citrus and table grape orchards, water canals and roads. The considered trees were not treated with any of insecticides throughout the experimental period because most of trees are close to irrigation canals and rural roads.

Sampling of arthropods:

Parasitoids:

Monthly samples (January 1st, 2011 up to December 30th, 2012) were taken from mulberry trees at Sakha and Kotoor areas. At each location, five mulberry trees were assigned, throughout the experimental period, for sampling. When sampling, 20 leaves and 4 branches (shoots) were picked up from a tree. Each tree was sampled from the four cardinal directions, east, west, north and south, as five leaves and one branch per direction. Thus, at each sampling date, 100 leaves and 20 branches were obtained from a location. The collected leaves and shoots were introduced into paper bags, and transferred to the insect laboratory, Sakha Agricultural Research Station for examinations.

Leaves having parasitoid insects only were separated from other insect infestations. Then, they were introduced into wooden boxes (50 x20 x 20 cm.) to collect the emerging parasitoids. A glass tube was inserted into a round hole of the box. An electric lamp (60w.) was placed in front of the box to attract emerging parasitoids, and enter the glass tube. Emerging parasitoids were identified and monitored and collected continuously by substituting the tubes having the parasitoids by new ones. Also, mulberry leaves were replaced by new ones having alive insects every two weeks.

Predators:

The insect pests, insect predators and spiders associated with mulberry insects were surveyed. Monthly samples were taken from the same five trees assigned for sampling insect pests, and at the same day. When sampling, the arthropods of four branches per tree were excluded by introducing the branch into a white cloth bag (50 cm long). Then, the branch was strongly beaten to drop the occurring arthropods inside the cloth bag. This procedure was conducted for the four branches of a tree. Thus, the arthropods were collected from 20 branches/ location/ sample. The cloth bag was thoroughly closed, transferred to the laboratory at Sakha Agricultural Research Station and kept in the refrigerator to anesthetize the confined arthropods. Fifteen minutes later, the bag was taken out from the refrigerator and emptied to examine and count the insect pests and natural enemies. Afterwards, specimens were kept in insect wooden boxes or into glass vials with 70 % ethyl alcohol, and two drops of glycerin to keep the arthropod tissues soft, to be easily handled, and identified.

Examination and Identification:

Monthly, the 100 leaves and twenty five branches of mulberry of a location were examined, and numbers of arthropods were recorded using a binocular microscope. Specimens of mites, insect pests, predators and emerging parasitoids were separated and initially identified, then sent to the Systematic Research Department and Biological Control Research Department at Plant Protection Research Institute, Giza, Egypt for confirming the identification.

Relationship between *Maconellicoccus hirsutus* and its predator, *Nephus bipunctatus*

During observations in Kafr-El Sheikh governorate, larvae and adults of *Nephus bipunctatus* (Kugelann) were found feeding voraciously on all stages of the *M. hirsutus*. Seasonal distribution of *M. hirsutus* and adult of *N. bipunctatus* was recorded on white mulberry from May to October, 2011. Randomly 10 shoots (20 cm. length) were taken from 5 mulberry trees in four direction, Kept in paper and polyethylene bags and transferred to laboratory to count the population of mulberry mealy bug (MMB) and its predator.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Arthropod pests inhabiting mulberry trees were surveyed on mulberry trees at Kafr El-Sheikh and Gharbia Governorates (Table 1).

Three mite species belonging to two families, Tenuipalpidae (one species) and two species were related to Tetranychidae. These species were detected from May - June or from May - September, according to the mite species. The surveyed arthropods were categorized regardless of the governorates. Thus, the listed insect pests, parasitoids and predators, were presented occurring in both locations. Twenty one insect species, belonging to thirteen families and five orders, were surveyed. Two species are related to order Thysanoptera by two families and two species (April-May). Order Hemiptera have two families and three species, *Nezara viridula* was detected from May to October. Homoptera is represented by four species and three families. Lepidoptera and Coleoptera are represented by six species for each. Lepidoptera have three families, Noctuidae (4 species), Phycitidae and Lyonetiidae one species for each. Coleoptera is represented by three families, Scarabaeidae (2 species), Cerambycidae (3 species) and Scolytidae (one species).

Table 1. Occurrence of minor arthropod pests attacking mulberry trees at Delta region from January 2011 to December 2012

| Order/ Family | Species | Period of occurrence |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Acarina | | |
| Tenuipalpidae | <i>Brevipalpus</i> sp. | May- June |
| Tetranychidae | Panonychus ulmi (Koch) | May- June |
| | Tetranychus urticae | May-Sept. |
| | Koch | |
| Insecta | | |
| Thysanoptera | | |
| Phlaeothripidae | <i>Haplothrips</i> sp. | April- May |
| Thripidae | <i>Thrips tabaci</i> Lindman | April- May |
| Hemiptera | | |
| Miridae | Campylomma sp. | May |
| Pentatomidae | Agonoscelis pubescens | May |
| | Thunb. | May-October |
| | Nezara viridula (L.) | |
| Homoptera | | |
| Aleyrodidae | Bemisia tabaci (Genn.) | April- May |
| Aphidae | Aphis gossypii Glov. | June-August |
| | Myzus persicae (Sulz.) | June-August |
| Cicadellidae | <i>Empoasca decipiens</i> Paoli | June-August |
| Lepidoptera | | |
| | Autographa gamma (L.) | May |
| Noctuidae | Trichoplusia ni (Hbn.) | May |
| Noctuldae | Spodoptera exigua (Hbn.) | April- September |
| | Spodoptera littoralis (Boisd.) | April- October |
| Phycitidae | Cryptoblabes gnidiella | April-May |
| | (Mill.) | |
| Lyonetiidae | Lyonetia clerkella (L.) | May |
| Coleoptera | 1 | |
| Scarabaeidae | Pachnoda fasciata (F.) | March |
| Scarabaeluae | Tropinota squalida (Scop.) | March –April |
| | Macrotoma palmata (F.) | July on <i>M. alba</i> |
| Cerambycidae | Rhaesus serricollis | July on <i>M. alba</i> |
| | (Motsch.) | Jul., Aug. on <i>M. alba &</i> |
| | Chlorophorus varius | M.nigra |
| | (Muell.) | |
| Scolytidae | Scolytus rugulosus | Dead wood |
| | (Muller) | |

Survey of scale insects and mealy bugs attacking mulberry trees:

Six species of scale insects were surveyed from mulberry trees. The scale insects are related to Asterolecaniidae, *Asterolecanium pustulans*, three Coccidae, *Ceroplastes rusci, Coccus hesperidium* and *Saissetia oleae*, and two Diaspididae, *Pseudaulacaspis pentagona* and *Hemiberlesia lataniae*. Three species of Pseudococcidae and three Margarodids, were surveyed at Kafr El-Sheikh and Gharbia Governorates (Table 2).

Scale insects and mealy bugs were previously surveyed from the Egyptian mulberry trees, *Icerya aegyptiaca*, *Maconellicoccus hirsutus*, *Ceroplastes rusci*, *Asterolecanium pustulans* (Hosny *et al*, 1976), *Ferrisia virgata* (Attia 2012).

Table 2. Scale insects and mealy bugs attacking mulberry trees at Delta region from

January 2011 to December 2012

| Family | Species | Period of occurrence |
|------------------|---|---|
| Asterolecaniidae | Asterolecanium pustulans (Ckll.) | January-December |
| | Ceroplastes rusci L. | June-August |
| Coccidae | Coccus hesperidum L. | June-August |
| | Saissetia oleae (Bern.) | June-August |
| Diaspididae | Pseudaulacaspis pentagona (TargTozz.) Hemiberlesia lataniae Signoret | January-December May - October |
| Margarodidae | Icerya aegyptiaca (Dough) Icerya purchasi Maskell Icerya seychellarum (Westw.) | May – October May – October May - October |
| Pseudococcidae | Ferrisia virgata (Ckll.) Planococcus citri (Risso) Maconellicoccus hirsutus (Green) | May – October May – October May - October |

Survey of parasitoids:

Seventeen species of super family Chalcidoidea belonging to five families and ten genera were collected during the period of study (January, 2011 till December, 2012) associated with mulberry armored, soft scales and mealy bugs. The obtained results in Table (3) show the parasitoid species and their hosts.

Table 3. Hymenopterous parasitoids attacking mulberry scale insects and mealy bugs in Delta region from January 2011 to December 2012

| Family | Parasitoid | Host species |
|----------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Pseudaulacaspis |
| | Aphytis spp. | pentagona |
| | | Hemiberlesia lataniae |
| Aphelinidae | Encarsia citrina (Crawford) | Pseudaulacaspis |
| | | pentagona |
| | | Hemiberlesia lataniae |
| | Coccophagus scutellaris (Dalman) | Coccus hesperidum |
| | Marietta leopardina Motschulsky* | Aphytis spp. |
| | Anagyrus kamali Moursi | Maconellicoccus hirsutus |
| | Anagyrus seudococci (Girault) | Maconellicoccus hirsutus |
| | Blepyrus insularis (Cameron) | Ferrisia virgata |
| | Clausenia josefi (Rosen) | Maconellicoccus hirsutus |
| | Coccidoxenoides peregrines | Planococcus citri |
| Encyrtidae | (Timberlake) | |
| Lifeyradae | Gyranusoidea sp. | Maconellicoccus hirsutus |
| | Leptomastidea abnormis (Girault) | Planococcus citri |
| | Leptomastix dactylopii Howard | Maconellicoccus hirsutus |
| | Matanhugusan | Ceroplastes floridensis |
| | <i>Metaphycus</i> sp. | Saissetia oleae |
| | <i>Microterys</i> sp. | Coccus hesperidum |
| Signiphoridae | Chartocerus sp. * | Leptomastidae abnormis |
| Platygastridae | Allotropa mecrida (Walker) | Maconellicoccus hirsutus |
| Pteromalidae | Scutallista caerulaa (Fonscolombo) | Ceroplastes rusci |
| rteromanuae | Scutellista caerulea (Fonscolombe) | Saissetia oleae |

^{*} hyperparasitoid

Survey of predaceous insects:

Thirty one insect predators, belonging to six orders and 11 families were surveyed from mulberry trees. Most of surveyed species are belonging to coleopteran, mainly Coccinellidae. The important predators are *Chilocorus bipustulatus* L., *Exochomus flavipes* Thunb., *Hyperaspis* sp., *Nephus includens* (Kirsch), *Nephus bipunctatus* (Kugelann), *Pharoscymnus* sp., *Rhizobius litura* F., *Rodolia cardinalis* (Mulsant), *Pullus syriacus* Mulsant, *Cybocephalus* sp. as they prey upon scale insects and mealy bugs. Family Coccinellidae was represented by 16 predatory species surveyed in the current study (Table 4). This family was often detected by several Egyptian authors when surveyed the scale insects and mealy bugs predators in fruit trees, e.g. Priesner. and Hosny,1940 and Hendawy 1999. In addition, two neuropterous species, *Conwentzia psociformis* (Curtis), *Chrysoperla carnea* Steph. prey upon the sam insect pests.

Table 4. Predatory insects inhabiting mulberry trees at Delta region from January 2011 to December 2012

| | December 2012 | Drov |
|--|--|---|
| Order/ Family | Species | Prey Theirs Mites |
| Thysanoptera Aeolothripidae | <i>Aeolothrips</i> sp. | Thrips, Mites |
| Hemiptera Anthocoridae | Orius laevigatus (Fieber) Orius albidipennis (Reuter) | Aphids, scale insects, mealy bugs, thrips, mites |
| Reduviidae | Coranus sp. (F.) | Moth |
| Coleoptera Coccinellidae | Chilocorus bipustulatus L. Coccinella undecimpunctata L. Cydonia vicina Isis Cr. Cydonia vicina nilotica Muls. Cydonia vicina subsignata Pic Exochomus flavipes Thunb. Hippodamia convergens GM. Hyperaspis sp. Nephus includens (Kirsch) Nephus bipunctatus (Kugelann) Pharoscymnus sp. Stethorus gilvifrons Mulsant Rhizobius litura F. Rodolia cardinalis (Mulsant) Scymnus interruptus (Goeze) | scale insects Aphids Mealy bugs Mealy bugs Mealy bugs Mealy bugs Mealy bugs Mites Aphids, Icerya spp. Aphids Aphids, Aphids Aphids Aphids Aphids |
| Carabidae | Pullus syriacus Mulsant Bembidion sp.* Tachys sp.* | Aphids |
| Cybocephalidae | Cybocephalus sp. | scale insects |
| Staphylinidae | Paederus alfierii Koch. Philonthus spp. | Aphids Aphids |
| Diptera Syrphidae | Eupeodes corollae (F.) Paragus compeditus (Wied.) Sphaerophoria rueppelli (Wied.) | Aphids Aphids Aphids |
| Neuroptera Coniopterygidae Chrysopidae | Conwentzia psociformis (Curtis) Chrysoperla carnea Steph. | Mites, mealy bugs Aphids, scale insects, mealy bugs, thrips, |
| Orthoptera Mantidae | <i>Mantis religiosa</i> L. | mites aphids, fruit flies, flies, moths |

^{*} Around tree trunks

Survey of predaceous mites:

Two predacious mites, belonging to family Phytoseiidae, and nine species, belonging to eight families of spiders, Araneidae, Dyctinidae, Miturigidae, Lycosidae, Pholcidae Salticidae, Theridiidae and Thomisidae, were surveyed (Table 5).

Table 5 . Predacious mites and spiders collected on mulberry trees at delta region

from January 2011 to December 2012

| mom January 201. | t to December 2012 | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| Family/Common name | Species | Period of occurrence | |
| Acarina Phytoseiidae | <i>Amblyseius</i> sp. <i>Typhlodromus</i> sp | May- July May-Sept. | |
| Araneae | Araneae | | |
| Araneidae weaver | Cyrtophora citricola Forskål | July. | |
| Dictynidae Mesh web weaver | <i>Dictyna</i> sp. | Jun., Jul. | |
| Miturigidae Long-legged sac spider | Chiracanthium sp. | May, Jun., July | |
| Lycosidae Wolf spider | Pardosa spp.* | May, June, July | |
| Pholcidae Daddylonglegs spiders | Pholcus phalangioides (Fuesllin) ** | Aug-Oct. | |
| Salticidae | Plexippus paykulli Audouin ** | May-Sept. | |
| Jumping spider | Thyene imperialis (Rossi) | May-Sept. | |
| Theridiidae Comb-footed spider | Theridion sp. | June, July | |
| Thomisidae Crab spider | Thomisius sp. *** | March | |

^{*} Around tree trunks ** Beside the houses *** on flowers

Periodical observations were recorded on the populations of mulberry mealy bug, *M. hirsutus* and its coccinellid predator, *N. bipunctatus* on mulberry shoots in mulberry trees from May to October, 2011. The mealy bug population raised during the period from June to September with the peak incidence of the pest observed

during second fortnight of June. During May to October, activity of other natural enemies could not be seen in the mulberry trees with the coccinellid predator, *N. bipunctatus* being the dominant predator feeding on the of mealy bug ovisacs. During September and October, presence of coccinellids like *Nephus includens* Kirsch and *Pullus syriacus* Marseul. could be noticed in the mulberry trees and the population of *N. bipunctatus* was declining (Table 6).

Table 6. Population fluctuations of the mulberry mealy bug, *Maconellicoccus hirsutus* and adult of coccinellid predator *Nephus bipunctatus* in mulberry tree at Kafr El- Sheikh Governorate (from May to October, 2011)

| Ran El Sheikh Governorde (Hom Pay to October, 2011) | | |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|
| | Population / Shoot 20 cm | |
| Date of collection | M. hirsutus | N. bipunctatus |
| 25 th May | 2.46 ± 56.86 | 2.00 ± 1.00 |
| 20 th June | 50.60 ± 23.79 | 1.30 ± 0.57 |
| 25 th July | 34.33 ± 5.03 | 2.00 ± 0.75 |
| 20 th August | 24.22 ± 2.44 | 1.5 ± 0.55 |
| 25 th September | 16.33 ± 4.50 | 0.66 ± 0.57 |
| 20 th October | 8.00 ± 4.36 | 0.33 ± 0.58 |

The values are mean \pm SD of 10 shoots(top apical)

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حصر مفصليات الأرجل علي أشجار التوت في منطقة الدلتا مع الإشارة بوجه خاص إلى الحشرات القشرية والبق الدقيقي والأعداء الحيوية المرتبطة بها

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في أول دراسة مصرية لحصر مفصليات الأرجل على أشجار التوت (الأبيض و الأسود) وأعداءها الحيوية المرتبطة بها في منطقة الدلتا، أجري الحصر من يناير ٢٠١١ حتى ديسمبر ٢٠١٢

خلال هذه الدراسة سجل صنفين من مفصليات الأرجل (الحشرات والعنكبوتيات). كانت الحشرات القشرية و البق الدقيقي (١٢ نوعا) هي الآفات الرئيسية لأشجار التوت أما الآفات الثانوية فتمثل ٢٤ نوعا من الحشرات والأكاروسات.

تم حصر ١٧ نوعا من الطفيليات المرتبطة بالحشرات القشرية والبق الدقيقي و كانت تتبع خمس فصائل، والطفيليات الأكثر تواجدا هي:

Aphytis spp., Encarsia citrina, Anagyrus kamali, Metaphycus spp., Allotropa mecrida, Scutellista caerulea .

كذا تم حصر ٣١ نوعاً من الحشرات المفترسة، و ٩ أنواع من العناكب الحقيقية المرتبطة بهذه الآفات، كما تم التعرف على نوعين من الأكاروسات المفترسة.

كما تم دراسة تقلبات التعداد لبق التوت الدقيقي Maconellicoccus hirsutus ، و المفترس المرتبط به Nephus bipunctatus