

FIRST RECORD OF THE DATE BUG, *ASARCOPUS PALMARUM* HORVATH (HEMIPTERA : ISSIDAE) IN EGYPT

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Date bug is a serious pest of date palms in various countries. It is reported by Stickney *et al.* (1950) from the United States of America in 1921.

During a recent survey of date palm insect pests in El-Bahria Oases (western desert of Egypt, the date bug, *Asarcopus palmarum* Horvath was found in El-Harrah and El-Agouz areas during July 1995. Insect population was high enough on young palms. Different nymph instars and adult stages were found among leaves of the palm heart (Fig. 1 b, c). Immature and adult stages (Fig. 1 d) feed on the white tissues of the leaf base and on unexpanded parts of the terminal leaves. Insects secrete honey dew in large amounts which promotes the growth of black mould fungi and attracts ants (Fig. 1 a). Feeding of high population causes withering of young leaves and high infestation may cause death of the young palms. Date bugs are active throughout the year, though less so in winter. Population on date palms consists primary of nymphal stage.

Collected specimens including nymphs and adults were preserved in 90% ethanol and sent to the British Museum for identification. These specimens were identified by Prof. Dr. F.J.D. McDonald at at April 29, 1996 as *Asarcopus palmarum* Harvath (Hemiptera : Issidae).

REFERENCES

STICKNEY, F.A.; BARNERS, D.A. and SIMONS, P. (1950) : Date palm insects in the United States. 846. USDA, Washington, D.C.

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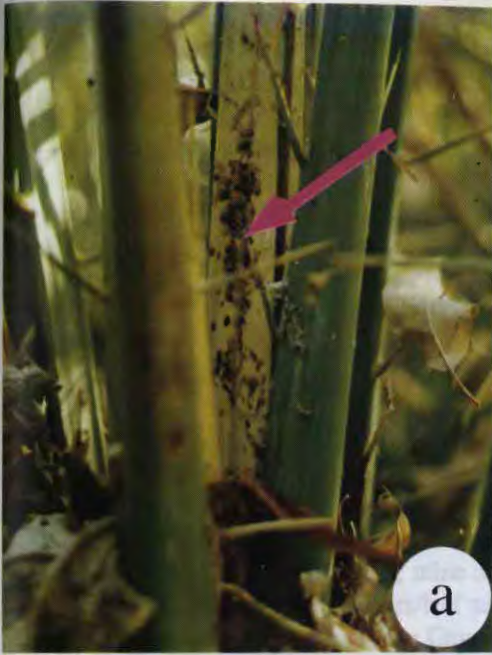


Figure (1) : Symptoms of date Palm infested by the date bug, *Asarcopus palmarum* Horvath at El-Babria oases , Egypt.
 a : Date bug feces on palm leaves , b , 1st nymph instar : c : 3rd nymph instar, : D : adult stage .