

Forum (Preliminary Results)

First Record of *Asmangulia wakkeri* (Zehnt.) (Hispidae: Coleoptera) as a Leaf Miner of the Common Reed *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) in East Saudi Arabia

A. Ziad Al-Ahmadi and M.M. Salem

Department of Plant Protection, College
of Agriculture, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Abstract. A hispid beetle, *Asmangulia wakkeri* (Zehnt.), was recorded for the first time mining the leaves of the common reed *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) in East Saudi Arabia.

The common reed *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) (= *Phragmites communis* Tim.) is a graminous, perennial, rhizomatous, tall, stout plant, widely spread in aquatic habitats in all regions of Saudi Arabia [1, p. 189-191]. It grows predominantly along ditches, irrigation drainage channels and swamping areas. Leaves of this plant which are flat and firm, with rough margins, have been found to be mined by larvae of a small black hispid beetle, identified as *Asmangulia wakkeri* (Zehnt.) (= *Hispa wakkeri* Zehnt.). This was the first record of a hispid beetle (Coleoptera) in Saudi Arabia.

The family Hispidae (regarded by some taxonomists as being only a subfamily of the Chrysomelidae), includes a number of important leaf-miners (Table 1) attacking rice and sugarcane in South Asia, the far East and Africa where they are considered of economic importance [2, p. 114-116; 3, p. 222-229; 4, p. 178-182].

A. wakkeri (Fig. 1, A) was previously reported from Indonesia as a serious rice and sugarcane pest [5, p. 102-103]. It also attacks the upper leaf tissues of several other graminaceous plants [3, p. 222-229]. The larvae mine the epidermis of the leaf, forming large yellowish-brown spots (Fig. 1, D). The adults abrade upper leaf surface in a series of more or less parallel lines. The full-grown larva is about 8 mm. long, yellowish white in color with a dark head and anal shield (Fig. 1, B). The pupa is dark and flat (Fig. 1, C). The adult is small, 5 mm. long, shiny black in color, provided with spines on either sides of the thorax, two on the anterior edge and three lateral ones. The antenna is filiform, short, with the first joint being spined. The elytra are armed

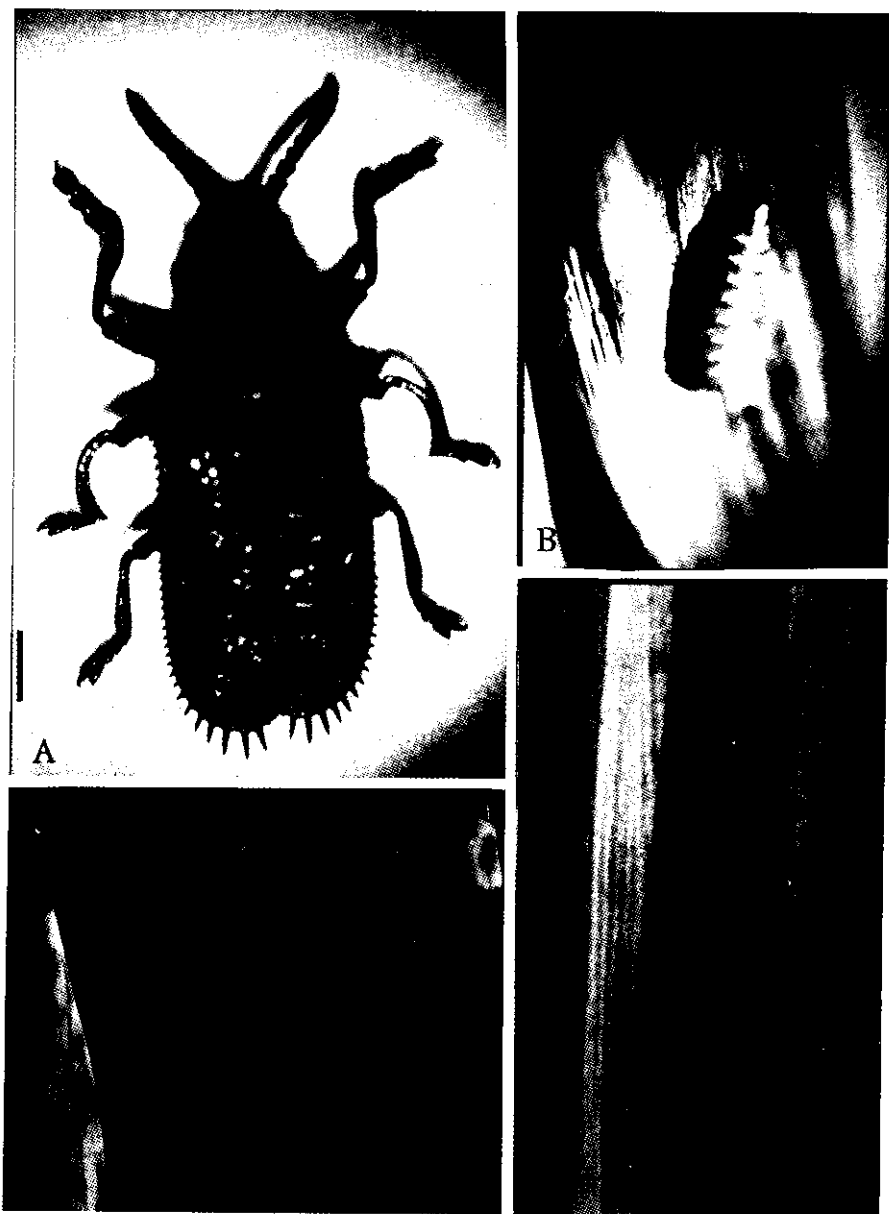


Fig. 1. *Asmangulia wakkeri* (Zehnt.)
A. Adult B. Larva C. Pupa D. Infested leaves.

Table 1. Hispidae attacking some major tropical crops

Species	Host		Distribution
	Rice	Sugarcane	
<i>Dicladispa armigera</i> (Ol.)	+	+	India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Indonesia, Philippines, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, China (part), New Guinea.
<i>Asmangulia wakkeri</i> (Zehnt.)	+	+	Indonesia
<i>Hispa stygia</i> (Chap.)	+	-	India
<i>Hispa aeneszens</i> Baley	+	-	India
<i>Rhadinosa parvula</i> (Motsch.)	+	-	Indonesia
<i>Rhadinosa lebongensis</i>	+	+	India, China
<i>Tichispa sericea</i> (Guen.)	+	-	Africa (Madagascar, Tanzania, Kenya, Guinea, Togo).
<i>Leptisma pygmaea</i> Baly	+	-	India, Sri Lanka, Japan.

(*) after Lamb (1974).

dorsally with strong spines and more delicate ones on the lateral margins (Fig. 1, A).

Several larvae have been found to be parasitized by a hymenopterous parasite belonging to the family Eulophidae. Although the wild common reed *Phragmites australis* constitutes the normal host plant for this insect in Saudi Arabia, there is a possibility for this insect to attack rice and sugarcane as it happens in many other countries. It is therefore suggested that rice and sugarcane plantations be put under full surveillance.

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**التسجيل الأول لصانعة الأنفاق (*Asmangulia wakkeri* (Zehnt.))
(الفصيلة *Hispidae* رتبة غمدية الأجنحة) على أوراق نبات الغاب شرقي
المملكة العربية السعودية**

أحمد زياد الأحدي ومجدي محمد سالم

قسم وقاية المزروعات، كلية الزراعة، جامعة الملك سعود، الرياض، المملكة العربية السعودية

ملخص البحث . شوهدت إصابات بأنفاق عريضة متطاولة ذات لون بني مصفر على أوراق نبات الغاب *Phragmitis australis* النامية على امتداد قنوات مياه الري في المنطقة الشرقية من المملكة خلال شهري أكتوبر ونوفمبر ١٩٩١م وقد تم تشریحها وعزل اليرقات والعذارى منها وتربيتها حتى خروج الحشرات الكاملة التي تم تصنيفها كخنافس صانعة للأنفاق (*Asmangulia wakkeri* (Zehnt.)) من الفصيلة *Hispidae* من رتبة غمدية الأجنحة . ويعتبر هذا السجل الأول لهذه الحشرة في المملكة .

وقد وجدت بعض اليرقات والعذارى متطفل عليها بطفيليات من الفصيلة *Eulophidae* رتبة غشائية الأجنحة وجارى تعريفها .

ونظراً لأهمية هذه الحشرة كآفة من آفات الأرز وقصب السكر في موطنها الأصلي وبعض الدول الأخرى فإنه يقترح وضع الحشرة تحت المراقبة لاحتمال إصابتها لهذين المحصولين الذين يزرعان في مساحات محدودة في المنطقة الشرقية .