ARZAMA DENS A\textsuperscript{1} AS A PEST OF DASHEEN\textsuperscript{2}

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ABSTRACT

Infestation of roots of dasheen \textit{Calocasia esculenta} L. by larvae of \textit{Arzama densa} in Florida make it imperative that this noctuid not be introduced into other countries for biological control of water hyacinth \textit{Eichhornia crassipes} (Mart.) Solms until biological and ecological studies are complete.

Larvae of \textit{Arzama densa} Walker are commonly found feeding on water hyacinth \textit{Eichhornia crassipes} (Mart) Solms in southeastern United States. The number of injured plants may exceed 50\% at times in the field (Vogel and Oliver 1969). Heavy losses to parasites, predators, and diseases apparently prevent the insect from becoming more numerous and causing greater damage to water hyacinth.

Fig. 1. Cross-section of dasheen root showing larval damage and empty pupal skin.

\textsuperscript{1}Lepidoptera: Noctuidae.
\textsuperscript{2}Florida Agricultural Experiment Station Journal Series No. 5503.
Introduction of *Arzama densa* without its natural enemies into other countries where water hyacinth is a problem has been suggested by numerous investigators. The only other host reported for *A. densa* is pickerel weed *Pontederia cordata* L., which apparently was the natural host before the introduction of water hyacinth.

*Arzama densa* was collected and reared from dasheen, *Calocasia esculenta* (L.), growing in an experimental plot near Gainesville, Florida. The larvae completely tunneled through the root rendering it unfit for use (Fig. 1). (Up to 15% of the mother roots were infested.) Watson (1917) reported that dasheen was attacked by the rotten wood caterpillar *Scoleocampa liburna* (Geyer). It is probable that this was a misidentification of the larva and that the actual insect was *A. densa*.

*Arzama densa* is either a highly variable species or represents a complex of species. Until the biology of this group is completely determined, *A. densa* should definitely not be introduced into other countries especially where dasheen or similar root crops are important.

**LITERATURE CITED**


**BRAZIL ENTOMOLOGY MEETING**

The “Sociedade Entomologica do Brasil” will promote and sponsor the 2nd Brazilian Congress of Entomology in Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul, 3-7 February 1975. The meeting will be held on the campus of the Faculty of Agriculture (Eliseu Maciel) of the Federal University of Pelotas in this southernmost state of Brazil.

The featured speaker of the Congress will be Dr. Kenneth L. Knight, President of the Entomological Society of America and Head of the Department of Entomology at North Carolina State University.

All phases of entomological research will be discussed at this meeting; however, major emphasis is usually given to applied and basic entomology concerned with tropical and subtropical crops grown in Brazil. This year, owing to the close proximity of the meeting place to Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay, it is likely to take on a definite international flavor. The meeting is open to all.

Most of the papers will be given in Portuguese, however, this should not be an obstacle if you are interested in the entomological problems of Brazil. Many of the members speak both English and Spanish and therefore, there should be little problem in the exchange of ideas.

Inquiries on the Congress or membership in SEB should be directed to: Dr. Pedrito Silva, President SEB, CEPLAC, Caixa Postal 7, Itabuna - Bahia - Brazil or Dr. Milton de Sousa Guerra, Vice President SEB, Fac. Agron. Eliseu Maciel, Caixa Postal 767, Pelotas - RS - Brazil, or Dr. Roger N. Williams, Foreign Liaison Delegate SEB, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Wooster, Ohio 44691.