Fig. 1. *Technomyrmex albipes*, worker. Length of insect 2.7 mm.

Fluker 1968). Specimens are in the Florida State Collection of Arthropods (Gainesville), Harvard University Museum of Comparative Zoology (Cambridge), and the Archbold Biological Station.

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SUGARCANE LACE BUG *LEPTODICTYIA TABIDA*, AN INSECT PEST NEW TO FLORIDA

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The sugarcane lace bug *Leptodictya tabida* (Herrich-Schaeffer) (Hemiptera: Tingidae) was discovered for the first time in Florida on July 26, 1990. Damage to sugarcane, *Saccharum* spp hybrids, by this tingid and subsequently the insects themselves were initially noticed at a field in Palm Beach County near Clewiston by G. Weinheimer and W. Davidhun, assistant geneticists at U. S. Sugar Corporation's Research Department. Specimens were identified as *L. tabida* by R. C. Froeschner (Smithsonian Institu-
tion, Washington, D.C.) on August 6, 1990. According to Froeschner, this tindal previ-
ously was known to occur in mainland United States only in Texas. L. tabida also is
known to occur in Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Panama, Nicaragua, Costa
Rica, Venezuela, and Hawaii (Chang 1985). This lacebug was referred to as “the sugar
cane tindal” as early as 1913 by Heidemann (1913).

A survey conducted after the initial discovery of L. tabida in Florida revealed that
many fields throughout the sugarcane growing area in Hendry and Palm Beach counties
were already infested by the tindal. P. Stansly (IFAS, University of Florida, Immokalee)
found the tindal in isolated plots of sugarcane in Collier County during August.
In several fields in Palm Beach County, some middle to upper-middle leaves were
infested by more than 100 adult and nymph lacebugs per leaf. Damage to leaves caused
by the insects was similar to that described by Chang (1985): feeding by L. tabida
resulted in light-green or yellow speckles on leaves, and moderately infested leaves on
at least some varieties displayed a red russetting often in the area from the middle to
the tip of the leaf. Van Zwaluwenburg (1926) called L. tabida a minor pest of sugarcane
in Mexico and stated “it sometimes becomes very abundant on older cane, but seldom
does any great damage. By the time it has fed to the extent of seriously drying the
leaves, their function has already been taken up by the newer leaves”. Based on my
observations of plants that had been infested by tindals during late July and early
August, damage usually appeared to be minor. However, there were plants in some
sugarcane fields that had been damaged to the extent that lower to middle leaves had
senesced and upper leaves were being damaged; L. tabida may have had an economic
impact against the growth of these plants. Varietal differences in lace bug resistance
have been noted in Hawaii (Chang 1985). In a replicated variety trial at one sugarcane
field surveyed in Florida, large levels of tindals and their damage were observed in the
commercial clone CL 61-620 while much lower levels were observed in the commercial
clon CL 73-239.

A good review with respect to the life cycle, bionomics, damage, and control of the
sugarcane lace bug along with a morphological description of adults and nymphs was
presented by Chang (1985). Host plants reported for L. tabida are corn (Zea mays L.),
guineagrass (Panicum maximum L.), johnsongrass (Sorghum halepense (L.) Persoon),
barnyardgrass (Echinochloa crusgalli (L.) Beauvlois), bamboo (species not given),
tensinte (Fuchshina mexicana Schrad.), and sugarcane (Chang 1985). According to
Chang & Ota (1986), there is a mymarid egg parasitoid of L. tabida in Costa Rica and
Venezuela; no egg parasitoids have yet been detected in Florida. The ladybeetle Col-
eomegilla maculata is the only other reported natural enemy of L. tabida (Chang 1985).
C. maculata fuscifrons (Mulsant) and at least five other coccinellids have been reported
to occur in Florida sugarcane (Hall 1988), but no coccinellids were observed feeding on
L. tabida during the survey.

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their contributions to this note.

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