

A new eriophyoid mite species (Acari: Eriophyoidea) damaging *Eucalyptus wandoo* in Western Australia

Knihinicki D.K. (1), D.L. de Queiroz (2) and *I.D.* Majer (3)

(1) NSW Industry & Investment, Orange Agricultural Institute, Forest Road Orange 2800; (2) Embrapa Florestas, Colombo, PR, Brazil/ Curtin University, Perth, WA; (3) Curtin University, Perth, WA.

Several species of eriophyoid mites are known to cause damage to economically important eucalypts. These include *Rhombacus* sp.n. and *Acalox ptychocarpi* Keifer on spotted gum, *Corymbia maculata*, a plantation tree in NSW and southern Queensland. Nevertheless, taxonomic information about eriophyoid mites from Australia, especially on native plants, is poor. A new eriophyoid species, *Acadicrus* sp. n., has recently been discovered on a *Eucalyptus* sapling in Armadale, WA, probably of *E. wandoo*, a commercial timber in short supply. This tiny, worm-like mite (about 200 µm long), causes severe distortion of new growing tips in saplings which take on a miniature witches' broom-like appearance. At first glance, the symptoms can be mistaken for a plant disease. This is the fourth species in the genus *Acadicrus* Keifer to be reported. Those previously described are: *Acadicrus bifurcatus* Keifer, 1965, *Acadicrus mergiferus* Keifer, 1965 and *Acadicrus eucalypti* (Gumey, 1924) found respectively on *Eucalyptus obliqua*, *E. viminalis* and *E. stricta*. All species known so far cause distortion of new growth and are possibly host specific. The frontal lobe on the prodorsal shield of *Acadicrus* forms two elongated processes which distinguishes it from other closely related genera of the tribe Phyllocoptini (Family: Eriophyidae). The genus *Acadicrus* has only been found in Australia so far. Based on the world-wide distribution of eriophyoid mites, certain genera, such as *Acadicrus* (4 spp.), *Acalox* (monotypic) and *Rhombacus* (7 spp.), which have mostly been described from eucalypts, may have Gondwanan origins. Eriophyoids are highly host specific and further surveys undoubtedly will reveal many unusual genera and species on Australian native plants which have economic significance both here and overseas.