

Notes and Comments

## First Report of *Leptocybe invasa* Fischer & LaSalle (Hymenoptera: Eulophidae) in the southern Tocantins, Brazil

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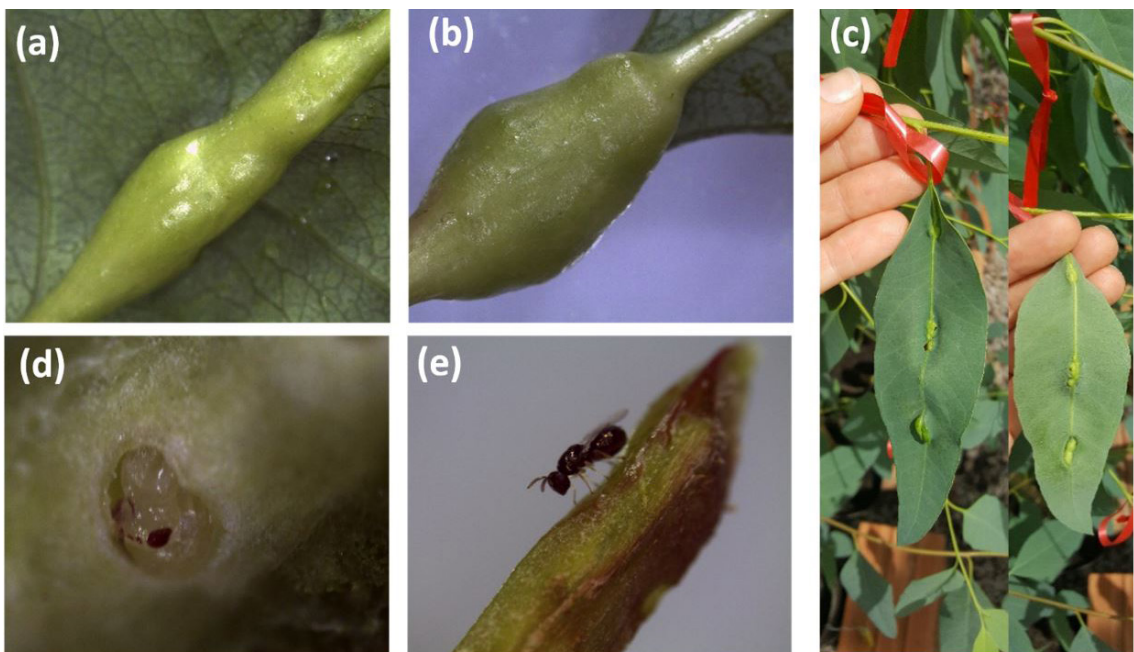
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The eucalyptus gall wasp, *Leptocybe invasa* Fischer & LaSalle (Hymenoptera: Eulophidae), causes severe damage to susceptible plants of the genera *Eucalyptus* L'Hér. and *Corymbia* K.D. Hill & L.A.S. Johnson, in which it induces galls in the midribs and petioles of young leaves and in the internodes of branch apices. Even though the insect attacks trees of all ages, the infestations are generally more severe in nursery seedlings and young plantations (1–3 years old) than in older plantations (Wylie and Speight 2012), and the wasp is more often found in warmer and drier zones than in colder and wetter zones (Nyeko et al., 2009).

The eucalyptus gall wasp spread quickly for plantations of *Eucalyptus* in nurseries and forest areas. The pest (Mendel et al., 2004, Nyeko et al., 2009) was first reported in northeast Brazil in 2008 (Wilcken and Berti-Filho 2008), and is currently distributed throughout America, Africa, Asia, the

Middle East, and Europe. This study aimed to report the presence of *L. invasa* in southern Tocantins state within central Brazil.

The pest was first observed infesting plants in a commercial plantation of *Eucalyptus* clones (VS058) from the crossbreeding of *Eucalyptus tereticornis* Sm. × *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* Dehnh., located in the municipality of Peixe, Tocantins (12.052696°S, 48.550525°W). This initial infestation was detected in an area of 180 ha, where it spreaded quickly to neighboring plantations, reaching an area of 3000 ha planted with clones from the crossbreeding mentioned above. After detection in the field, the wasp attack was also found in clonal rooted cuttings of *Eucalyptus* clones from this same crossbreeding. With an infestation intensity of up to 30 galls per plant branch, the galls were first observed on the midribs and petioles of leaves with young buds, and the emergence holes dug by the adult insects were observed in plant branches approximately six months old (Figure 1). After detecting the wasp attacking young plants,



**Figure 1.** Figures a and b illustrate a midrib gall (a) and a petiole gall (b), leaves with galls along the midrib – adaxial and abaxial surfaces (c), exit hole of adult insect (d) and *L. invasa* adult (e).

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even in the field, or in clonal rooted cuttings, the wasp was also found attacking old plants with the same infestation intensity mentioned above. Emerging adult wasps were sent to Professor Carlos Frederico Wilcken (Faculty of Agronomic Sciences, Paulista State University, Botucatu Campus). The specimens were confirmed as *L. invasa*, according to the description of Mendel et al. (2004). Thus, the pest was first reported from central Brazil, in the southern Tocantins state.

This report remarks on the importance of carrying out sanitary inspection programs of the *L. invasa* in central Brazil and provided information on its new occurrence to facilitate the research regarding control strategies.

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