

# Rusty Plum Aphid, *Hysteroneura setariae*, on Seashore Paspalum Turfgrass

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A colony of the **rusty plum aphid**, *Hysteroneura setariae* (Thomas) (Hemiptera: Aphididae), was found on seashore paspalum cv's 'Sea Dwarf' and 'Sea Green' at Belle Glade, Florida in March 2005. This North American native is distributed throughout warmer parts of the world. We routinely catch them in our suction traps located around Florida. Preliminary literature searches indicate that this is the first record of this aphid feeding on seashore paspalum. There is no previous record of *H. setariae* feeding on this turfgrass in Florida.

These small brown aphids have dark cornicles and a long pale cauda. The third and fourth antennal segments and proximal two thirds of the tibia are pale to colorless with distal portions of these appendages dark to black in color.

The biology of this species is complicated by reproductive and host plant feeding cycles that are dependent on temperature and availability of its hosts. It either splits the seasons between *Prunus* spp. and Gramineae, or feeds entirely on Gramineae. Sexual reproduction occurs in presence of *Prunus* spp.,

whereas this aphid reproduces asexually when associated with grasses. Genera of grasses utilized by the rusty plum aphid include *Cynodon*, *Eragrotis*, *Eleusine*, *Hordeum*, *Oryza*, *Panicum*, *Pennisetum*, *Saccharum*, *Seteria*, *Sorghum* and *Triticum*. It is also known from Cyperaceae and coconut seedlings.

Very little is known at this time about their biology on seashore paspalum. Winged and wingless females and nymphs prefer to feed at the base of leaves above and below the leaf collar. No specific feeding damage has been observed or previously attributed to this aphid feeding on paspalum.

However, the rusty plum aphid is a vector of several viruses, including sugarcane mosaic potyvirus, cucumber mosaic, watermelon mosaic 2 and zucchini yellow mosaic.

