

Sipha maydis Passerini:
A NEW GRASS/CEREAL APHID IN NORTH AMERICA

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In October 2007, a nursery detection survey sample of aphids on *Leymus condensatus* (Giant wild rice) was submitted to the Plant Pest Diagnostic Center at CDFA. It contained a mixture of adult apterae, nymphs and alates of two species: *Sipha flava* (Forbes) (Yellow sugar cane aphid), and *Sipha (Rungsia) maydis* Passerini. Although *Sipha flava* is a common in North America, *Sipha maydis*, is new to the nearctic. It is in the *Sipha* subgenus *Rungsia*, of the aphid tribe Siphini, subfamily Chaitophorinae.



Sipha (Rungsia) maydis aptera

Sipha maydis feeds broadly on grasses and cereal crops, and has been recorded on numerous species over 30 genera of Gramineae (Blackman & Eastop 2006). In the literature, its distribution is Europe, to the middle east, through central Asia, to Pakistan and India; and it occurs in South Africa (Blackman & Eastop 2007). More recently, it is also now in Argentina (Ortego & Difabio 2002).

Sipha maydis is able to transmit *cucumovirus* (cucumber mosaic) and *luteovirus* (barley yellow dwarf) (Blackman & Eastop 2000). In drier climates, outside NW Europe, it can be an economically important pest of all cereal crops (Blackman & Eastop 2000). *Sipha maydis* feeds on the upper surfaces of leaf blades near the bases, and sometimes on the stems and inflorescences, where it may be ant attended (Blackman & Eastop 2006). Heavily infested leaves may become yellowed, rolled into tubes and desiccated (Blackman & Eastop 2000).

Sipha maydis may be recognized by having apterae that are small, pear-shaped and somewhat dorsoventrally flattened. They is dark brown to nearly black, and fully sclerotized on the dorsum. It has a 5-segmented adult antennae and spinous body setae, both characteristic of *Sipha*, but has a broadly rounded cauda that is characteristic of the subgenus *Rungsia*, instead of the knob-shaped cauda of *Sipha* (*Sipha*). The species also has alates that have a broad dark sclerotic patch on the dorsal abdomen (Blackman & Eastop 2000).

References

- Blackman, R.L. & V.F. Eastop. 2000. Aphids on the World's Crops, An Identification and Information Guide. (Second Ed.) John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Chichester, England. 466 p.
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- Ortego, J. & Difabio, M.E. 2002. Primer registro de *Sipha* (*Rungsia*) *maydis* Passerini 1860 (Hemipera:Aphididae) potencial plaga de cereales en Argentina. In: Resúmenes XI Jornadas Fitosanitarias Argentinas. 26-28 de Junio. Fac. de Agronomía y Veterinaria, UNRC, Córdoba. 126 p.