ERETMOCERUS EREMICUS: A NEW WHITEFLY PARASITOID FOUND IN NEW ZEALAND

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In the summer of 2006-07 unsprayed vegetable crops in the Auckland region were surveyed to locate and identify natural enemies of whitefly, thrips and psyllids that could be used as biological control agents for pests of greenhouse crops. A natural enemy that was specifically sought was a yellow parasitoid of greenhouse whitefly *Trialeurodes vaporariorum* that had previously been observed in the Auckland region in greenhouse crops (T. Marais, pers. comm.). This parasitoid was identified in 1997 by Dr J. Berry, (Landcare Research) as *Eretmocer* sp. The 2006-07 survey located three populations of a yellow parasitoid of greenhouse whitefly: on runner beans in a home garden at Waimauku, in an organic garden in Silverdale and on greenhouse tomatoes in Mangere. Sequences of diagnostic COII, ITS2 and D3 gene regions were obtained from the Waimauku samples and subsequent interrogation of sequence databases using BLAST identified the parasitoid as *Eretmocer* *warrae* (Naumann and Schmit 2000) (Hymenoptera: Aphelinidae). *Eretmocer* *warrae* was found across the southern half of Australia in surveys in 1995-97 and is considered endemic to Australia but has only been found from the exotic greenhouse whitefly. In 2008 specimens of *Eretmocer* collected in 1997 and 2006 were examined by CSIRO and were considered to be morphologically identical. It was concluded that both samples of the parasitoids were *Eretmocer* *eremicus*, which is now considered to be synonymous with *E. warrae*.

A NEW LURE FOR THRIPS MAJOR

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The addition of either a prototype lure or a commercially available lure, LUREM-TR, increased capture of the pest, *Thrips major* Uzel, on sticky traps in a commercial greenhouse and an outdoor crop in the Netherlands. This pest species is widespread throughout Europe, but has not yet been confirmed present in New Zealand. In greenhouses of capsicum, sticky traps with a prototype lure caught between 12 to 60 times more *T. major*, compared to traps without the prototype lure. In an outdoor crop of leek, traps with the commercial lure, LUREM-TR, caught between 2 to 13 times more *T. major* than traps without the lure. *Thrips major* breeds on a range of flowering plants, and has been implicated in fruit loss in nectarine, peach and strawberries. *Thrips major* can cause extensive damage through feeding and ovipositioning, although it has not been found to vector tospoviruses.