

OUTBREAKS AND NEW RECORDS ATTAQUES ET NOUVEAUX ENNEMIS SIGNALÉS NUEVOS FOCOS DE ENFERMEDADES Y PLAGAS

ESPAÑA

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Difusión de *Phoracantha* en el Mediterráneo occidental

En 1981 se han visitado los eucaliptales de Portugal¹, Marruecos² y España³, y se ha identificado el insecto *Phoracantha semipunctata* Fab., en cada uno de los tres países, en las áreas que se indican en el mapa adjunto (Figura 1).

Esta es una novedad no citada antes en la bibliografía sobre el tema.

El área ha sido afectada probablemente a partir de dos focos principales: el primero partió de las cercanías de Lisboa y llegó al sur de España; el segundo, de cerca de la frontera de Marruecos con Argelia, y se extendió por el norte de Marruecos hasta el Atlántico.

En ambos casos, la invasión se ha producido a lo largo de las rutas principales de transporte de madera procedente de plantaciones atacadas.

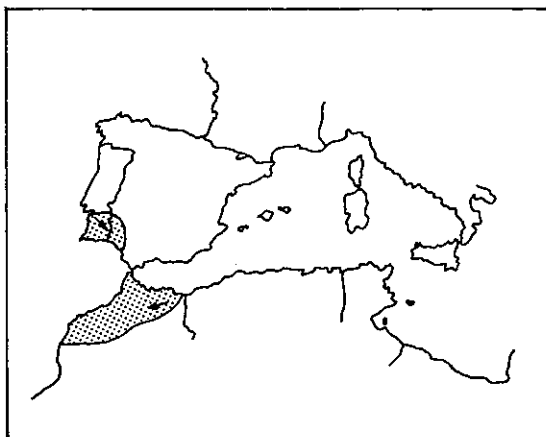


Figura 1. Área afectada por *Phoracantha semipunctata*.

¹ CADAHIA, D. y RUPEREZ, A. 1981. El perforador de eucaliptos, Ministerio de Agricultura, 6 págs.

² ROBREDO, F. y RUPEREZ, A. 1981. Plagas y enfermedades de los árboles, informe general, cooperación técnica forestal Hispano-Marroquí, 77 págs.

³ CADAHIA, D. y RUPEREZ, A. 1980. Posible aparición de *Phoracantha semipunctata* (Fab.) en España, Boletín del Servicio de Defensa contra Plagas e Inspección Fitopatológica, 6, p. 119-122.

GABON

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Bunchy top disease of plantain

Bunchy top disease symptoms have been noted on plantain (*Musa paradisiaca*) in Gabon for some time, but it was not until the author inspected these symptoms closely that a definite identification was made in March 1981. No evidence of transmission has been observed, though this must, obviously, take place. Appar-

ently originating in Tanna in the New Hebrides; bunchy top has also been reported from Australia, Tonga, Fiji, Western Samoa, Wallis Islands, Bonin Islands, Mariana Islands, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sabah (Malaysia), Taiwan (province of China), Hong Kong, South Vietnam, Laos, Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, Egypt and Zaire.^{1,2} Plantain suckers were imported from Taiwan (province of China) by the Chinese Mission at Akok in the Estuary Province (Province de l'Estuaire) of Gabon in about 1968 and it is thought that the disease was introduced into the area in this way. Bunchy top disease seems to be confined to the Estuary

Province. Up to 30 percent losses have been observed in newly planted stands of plantain and the disease is spreading.

Bunchy top disease is caused by a virus, which is transmitted by the banana aphid (*Pentalonia nigronervosa* Ck11.). This aphid is found wherever plantain or banana is grown. Although the banana aphid has been reported on taro (*Colocasia antiquorum*), *Caladium* spp., ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) and related species of Araceae and Zingiberaceae, bunchy top disease has only been reported from the following *Musa* species: *M. ensete* (African banana), *M. sapientum* (desert banana), *M. sinensis* (dwarf Cavendish), *M. paradisiaca* (plantain), *M. textilis* (Manila hemp or abaca) and *M. banksii*².

Infection by the disease and subsequent symptom production may take place at any stage of plant development. The virus becomes systemic, though only the leaves and inflorescences seem to be affected. The outstanding symptom of the disease is the modification of the leaves, which become reduced in size, stiff, upright and lanceolate and appear to be bunched together since the petiole is unable to free itself from the sheath. The leaves become brittle with chlorotic margins, and patches of interveinal chlorosis appear, causing the leaf margins to shred and giving the leaves a ragged appearance. Closer examination of the leaves reveals broken, dark green, interveinal lines, which continue downward into the midrib, giving the impression of hooks. These symptoms

can best be seen when holding an infected leaf up to the light. Infected plants become stunted; in mature plants, the throats of the pseudostem become congested as a result of the bunching of the leaves, which prevents the inflorescence from emerging. Bunches, if formed, are distorted, reduced in size and unproductive.

The only known method of control is to uproot the infected plants completely, taking care that no buds are left in the ground to produce other infected plants, and to destroy the entire uprooted plant³.

Although the main staple foodstuff in Gabon is cassava, plantain is an important addition to the Gabonese diet. The unripe fruit is peeled and boiled and is either eaten in this way or is pounded into a paste. Ripe fruit is roasted over a fire without peeling. Banana is always eaten ripe as a fruit, whereas plantain is eaten as a vegetable. It is estimated that 152 000 tonnes of plantain were produced in Gabon in 1980⁴, which indicates the importance of this crop.

¹ WARDLAW, C.W. 1972. *Banana disease, including plantains and abaca*, p. 68-100. 2nd ed. London, Longman.

² STOVER, R.H. 1972. *Banana, plantain and abaca diseases*, p. 217-224. Kew, Commonwealth Mycological Inst.

³ MAGEE, C.J. 1967. *The control of banana bunchy top*. New Caledonia, South Pacific Commission 1967. S.P.C. Tech. Paper 150.

⁴ Director of Statistics, Ministère de l'agriculture, des eaux et forêts et du développement rural, Libreville. Personal communication.

MEXICO

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Lethal yellowing disease of coconut palms¹

Lethal yellowing disease has decimated coconut palm (*Cocos nucifera* L.) populations in Jamaica, Cuba, and Florida in the Caribbean Basin, and in Ghana, Togo and Benin in western Africa.^{2,3,4} We report the first occurrence of this

disease in Mexico, which is also the first report in a coconut-growing area of mainland Central America.

In January 1982 the senior author visited the northeastern region of the Yucatán Peninsula under the cooperative sponsorship of the United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and the Dirección General de Sanidad Vegetal, Mexico. Numerous dying coconut palms in Cancún and Puerto Juárez in the State of Quintana Roo had symptoms typical of lethal yellowing (see Fig. 1). A small number of dying palms were observed on Isla Muferes to the north of Cancún. Palms