

**OLIGONYCHUS KARAMATUS (EHARA) NEW TO SLOVENIA
(ACARI: TETRANYCHIDAE)**

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Abstract - *Oligonychus karamatus* (Ehara) was found in the Julian Alps infesting *Larix decidua* Miller. This is the first record of this Palearctic spider mite in Slovenia and the most western in its distribution area.

Izvleček *OLIGONYCHUS KARAMATUS* (EHARA), NOVA VRSTA V SLOVENIJI (ACARI: TETRANYCHIDAE)

V Julijskih alpah je bila na navadnem macesnu najdena pršica *Oligonychus karamatus* (Ehara). To je prva najdba te palearktične vrste pršice v Sloveniji in hkrati njeno najbolj zahodno znano nahajališče.

In the framework of a Dutch-Slovenian twinning project of the European Union spider mites were sampled in the Julian Alps. On July 23, 2002, a spider mite species new to Slovenia was sampled from *Larix decidua* Miller trees at Vršič at an elevation of 1400 m: *Oligonychus karamatus* (Ehara, 1956) (fig. 1). A large sample was taken, containing both females, males and a few juveniles. Sucking damage was obvious on the needles by the presence of white spots, but browning and early needle drop was not observed. No predatory mites (e.g. Phytoseiidae) were observed, but in rather low numbers the Thysanoptera *Thrips pini* (Uzel) and its predator in the larval stage *Aeolothrips vittatus* Haliday were present on the trees (both are recorded here new for Slovenia).

Oligonychus karamatus is known to feed on *Larix kaempferi* (Lambert) Carrière (= *L. leptolepis* Siebold & Zuccarini), the Japanese Larch and *L. decidua*, the European Larch (Bolland et al., 1998). Both species are needle bearing trees that drop their needles in the winter. The mite has been described from Japan (Ehara, 1956; collected in 1953) and is subsequently recorded from Russia, Hungary, Korea and China. On Hokkaido, in the north of Japan, *O. karamatus* is common and very often found to be highly injurious to larches (Ehara, 1962). The Slovenian record represents the most western limit of its known distribution.

References

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Fig. 1: Aedeagus of *Oligonychus karamatus* (photo Prof. dr. G. Karssen)