
The Unintentional Introduction into the USA of *Chaetorellia succinea* – a ‘Lucky Break’ for Biological Control of Yellow Starthistle?

JOE K. BALCIUNAS¹ and BALDO VILLEGAS²

¹USDA-ARS, Exotic and Invasive Weed Research Unit,
800 Buchanan Street, Albany, California 94710, USA

²CDFCA Biological Control Program, 3288 Meadowview Road,
Sacramento, California 95832, USA

In 1996, during surveys to recover *Chaetorellia australis*, a tephritid seed head fly approved for release to control yellow starthistle (YST) in the USA, we detected another similar fly. This was subsequently identified as *Chaetorellia succinea*. Through review of voucher specimens and release records, we determined that this fly was unintentionally introduced in 1994, when a shipment from Greece containing not only the approved *Chaetorellia australis*, but also *Chaetorellia succinea*, was released in southern Oregon. This site was subsequently used for redistribution to many other sites in several states. We present a map of this fly's current distribution in California, and discuss the recoveries of this fly in adjoining states. Although there were only a few releases in California, it has spread quickly and is now the most widespread natural enemy attacking YST in this state. At many sites it is very abundant, destroying a large portion of the YST seeds. However, European scientists had earlier rejected this fly from further consideration as a biocontrol agent for YST, because they felt that *Chaetorellia succinea* might pose a threat to safflower growers. We report on the preliminary results of our ‘trap plant’ studies, and two years of monitoring commercial safflower fields in California. We feel that this unintentionally released fly poses only an insignificant risk to commercial safflower growers.

Plant Phenology as an Indicator of Developmental Events in Weed-Feeding Insects

RICH W. HANSEN

USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Forestry Sciences Lab, P.O. Box 170278, Montana State Univ.,
Bozeman, Montana 59717-0278, USA

Leafy spurge, *Euphorbia esula* (Euphorbiaceae), is an exotic weed infesting grassland habitats in the United States and Canada. Phenology models describing the seasonal abundance of insects utilized as leafy spurge biocontrol agents have been developed for the US, based on accumulated degree-days. These agents are employed across a large area of the western and midwestern US, an area characterized by considerable latitudinal and elevational variability. In addition, recording weather stations are often widely scattered,