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The Presence of Leptoglossus occidentalis Heidemann, 1910 (Heteroptera: Coreidae) in North-East Hungary

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ABSTACT: This paper deals with the newest data of the distribution of *Leptoglossus occidentalis* Heidemann, 1910 (Heteroptera) in Hungary. A specimen of *Leptoglossus occidentalis* has been collected in Mátrafüred (Gyöngyös, Hungary) in the region of the Mátra Hills.

A male of *Leptoglossus occidentalis* was collected in Mátrafüred on 15th August 2006. The collected specimen is the first to be collected in the area of the Mátra Hills. This specimen can be found in the insect collection of the Mátra Museum.

The presence of significant characteristic features of the species – such as reddish-brown colour, inverted white V-marking on the fore wing, length of 20 mm and leaf-like expansions on the hind tibiae – made immediate identification of the specimen possible. (fig.1)

Since this species is new in the collection, a brief introduction is necessary.

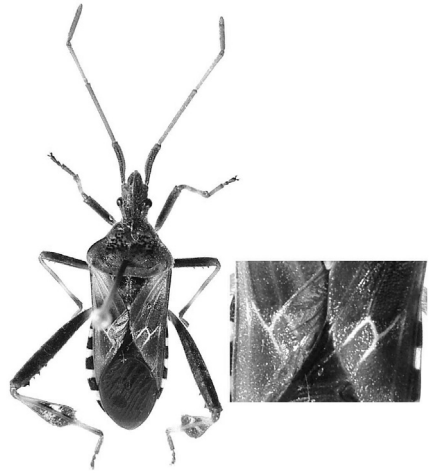

fig. 1.

It was first described in the western part of North America in 1910. But it soon started to spread southwards to Mexico.

In Europe, it was first collected in northern Italy (BERNARDINELLI, I. & ZANDIGIACOM, P. 2001, TESCARI, G., 2001). It is easy to follow its route northwards in Europe on the basis of published data: it was described in Slovenia in 2003 by GOGALA, A., in Croatia in 2004 by TESCARI, G., in Austria in 2005 by RABITSCH, W.& HEISS, E. Its appearance in Hungary was first reported on the meeting of the Hungarian Association of Entomologists in May, 2006. Four new Hungarian data was reported by Harmat, B., KONDOROSY, E. & RÉDEI, D. (2006).

As it is obvious from the European distribution, this species is very invasive. Moreover, in North America it causes serious damages, since it is considered to be a pest for conifers. The *Leptoglossus occidentalis* pierces the cones

of host plants, sucks out the seed endosperm, causing abortion and infertility (BATES, S. L. & BORDEN, J. H. 2005). The adults have been reported – mainly on websites dealing with invasive species (http://invasivespecies.html) – to seek overwintering quarters in houses in autumn. In May the females lay the eggs on the needles of conifers. According to previous observations, the host plants include *Pinus, Picea, Abies, Pseudotsuga* species. The first generation hatch in 10 days; they pass through four further moults, and the new adults appear by August.

The appearance of *Leptoglossus occidentalis* must draw the attention of the experts of pest control; on the basis of North American data, it can spread in the whole country of Hungary very fast owing to its reproductive strategy. Its damages are so significant in America that several surveys are being carried out on protection. Experts try to provide pest control with the help of its parasites (ZIMMERMANN, O., LORENZ, N., HASSAN, S. &WÜHRER, B. 2003).

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