

NOTES ON A SOUTHERN RECORD FOR *SOLENOPSIS GEMINATA* (HYMENOPTERA: FORMICIDAE)

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Three nests of the fire ant, *Solenopsis geminata* (Fabricius, 1804) were collected in the city of Viçosa, Minas Gerais, Brazil in February, 1994. This represents the southernmost record for *S. geminata*, which had been recorded for Bahia and possibly Espírito Santo (KEMPF, 1972). In Viçosa, *S. geminata* is sympatric with the more abundant, and closely related (TRAGER, 1991) *Solenopsis saevissima* (Fr. Smith, 1855). The *S. geminata* workers from Viçosa are relatively very black, unlike forms from more northern sites. As nests were only found within the city and not in nearby agricultural areas, it is hypothesized that this population was introduced, possibly from Bahia through the transport of potted plants. This fire ant is a known tramp species, with introduced populations being found in India, and the Galapagos Islands (KEMPF, 1972) at populations which produce economic damages (PASSERA, 1994). This species probably is not able to colonize extensive areas in the south of Brazil due to the presence of *S. saevissima*. However, this finding suggests that the potential for introductions into residential areas exists, and that this species may possibly become an urban pest.

Interestingly, the phorid parasite *Pseudaceton curvatus* Borgmeier, 1925, was found to hover both *S. saevissima* and *S. geminata*. Whether this phorid is a parasitoid of *S. geminata* is thus uncertain, but apparently the species are sufficiently similar to elicit search behavior by the phorid. This species is a known parasitoid of *S. saevissima* (PESQUERO et al., 1988), although no ovipositional attacks were seen against *S. geminata*. This may imply that the phorid could distinguish differences between species, and may be highly host-specific.

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