

PEST ALERT

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Pauroaspis scirrosis (Russell) (Hemiptera: Coccothraupidae: Asterolecaniidae), another adventive pit scale on bamboo detected in Florida

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INTRODUCTION

On March 4, 2026, FDACS-DPI inspectors Grayson Grume and Hannah Topel collected pit scales from a landscape planting of *Bambusa vulgaris* Schrad. ex J.C. Wendl. (Poaceae) located in an apartment complex parking lot in St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida. Among the four pit scale species in the sample, one was identified as *Pauroaspis scirrosis* (Russell) (Hemiptera: Coccothraupidae: Asterolecaniidae), a new **US continental record**. There are eight species of *Pauroaspis* Tang worldwide (Li et al., 2025), but only one of them, *P. scirrosis*, is known to occur outside of Asia. While presumably native to Asia, this species has been present in the Western Hemisphere since as early as 1933 (Russell, 1941). *Pauroaspis scirrosis* has been reported from the following countries: Angola, Antigua, Brazil, China, Cuba, Guatemala, Philippines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Taiwan, Trinidad and Hawaii in the United States (Russell, 1941; Stumpf & Lambdin, 2006; García Morales et al., 2016). To our knowledge, this is the first time this species has been reported from the Florida landscape, bringing the total number of named pit scales in Florida to 12 species in six genera (species tabulated below). Six of these species are bamboo specialists.

SURVEY AND IDENTIFICATION

Live *P. scirrosis* are extremely inconspicuous due to their miniscule size (less than 1mm in body length), irregular test architecture and cryptic coloration, and the position in which they settle to feed on the host between the sheath and leaf blade. This combination gives the adult female the appearance of a waxy outgrowth of the node, virtually indistinguishable from the plant tissue itself and challenging to see with a naked eye (Figure 1). Adult females appear dull yellow to orange in life and are enclosed in a hard, transparent, crystalline test. *Pauroaspis scirrosis* can be obscured further by similarly colored auricles and fimbriae, the flaps of tissue and hair-like structures on bamboo leaves, respectively (Figure 1). Conversely, slide-mounted adult female *P. scirrosis* are one of the easiest pit scales in Florida to recognize due to the presence of a distinct sclerotized anal plate, position of the caudal tubes laterad of the anal ring, and unique distribution of dorsal 8-shaped and quinquelocular pores (Figure 2).

DISTRIBUTION IN FLORIDA

Pauroaspis scirrosis was first collected in Pinellas County (LIST 03042026-01801) and was promptly found again by one of the authors three days later in Miami-Dade County at a botanical garden (LIST 03232026-02369). The same month, it was detected on *Bambusa multiplex* (Lour.) Raeusch. ex Schult. & Schult.f. for sale in Alachua County (LIST 03242026-02426). Thus, its distribution within Florida is almost certainly more widespread. It is likely that *P. scirrosis* has been overlooked due to the non-insect-like appearance of the adult female (Figure 1).

ASTEROLECANIIDAE IN FLORIDA

Species that specialize on bamboo are denoted by an asterisk (*).

1. *Asterolecanium epidendri* (Bouché, 1844)
2. *Asterolecanium puteanum* Russell, 1941
3. *Bambusaspis bambusae* (Boisduval, 1869)
4. *Bambusaspis bambusicola* (Kuwana, 1916)*
5. *Bambusaspis coronata* (Green, 1909)*
6. *Bambusaspis miliaris* (Boisduval, 1869)*
7. *Bambusaspis minuta* (Takahashi, 1930)*
8. *Bambusaspis tetrasetosa* Stumpf & Lambdin, 2006*
9. *Pauroaspis scirrosis* (Russell, 1941)*
10. *Planchonia stentae* (Brain, 1920)
11. *Russellaspis pustulans* (Cockerell, 1892)
12. *Sclerosococcus bromeliae* McKenzie, 1963



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Figure 1. Live adult females of *Pauroaspis scirrosus* (Russell) (a–c) in junction of leaf sheath and blade of bamboo. Arrows point toward individual adult females.

Photos (a) and (b) by Erin C. Powell, FDACS-DPI and (c) by Jonathan Bremer, FDACS-DPI.



Figure 2. Slide-mounted adult female *Pauroaspis scirrosis* (Russell) from Alachua County, Florida (LIST 03242026-02426).
Photo by Erin C. Powell, FDACS-DPI.