

Pest Alert

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Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry
Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner of Agriculture

Lobate lac scale, *Paratachardina pseudolobata* Kondo & Gullan (Hemiptera: Kerriidae)

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INTRODUCTION: The lobate lac scale, *Paratachardina pseudolobata* Kondo & Gullan, was first collected in the USA, in Florida, on August 25, 1999. The host plant, *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*, was destroyed by the owner. On March 16, 2000, an infestation was found in Miami-Dade County, Florida. Several additional locations and hosts have been found since then.

Paratachardina pseudolobata has now established in Florida and is now considered common in the south Florida landscape.

The resinous secretions of this scale insect family (Kerriidae) produce a very important product known as lac or shellac, which forms the basis of varnishes. In India, the related genus *Tachardia* is used to produce the commercial product shellac.

DESCRIPTION: The resinous scale covering is light to dark reddish brown. Old individuals will frequently appear black because of the sooty molds. The shape is globose with four lobes, and young individuals generally appear more lobed than mature adults. The case size is about 1.5 mm long, and 1.0 mm wide, but individuals in close proximity will frequently coalesce forming masses of several individuals. Young individuals often appear like a "fat bow tie." The resinous case conforms approximately to the shape of the insect inside. Exactly how the insect grows larger within such a rigid case is not understood entirely.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE: The lobate lac scale has not been a major pest in nurseries. It is now considered as a common landscape pest in south Florida. For control information, please go to the following Web site: <http://trec.ifas.ufl.edu/mannion/pdfs/LobateLacScale.pdf>.

HOSTS and DISTRIBUTION: The first collection in Florida was on *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* (hibiscus) in Broward County, and the second collection was on *Chrysobalanus icaco* (cocoplum) in Miami-Dade County. Since then it has been collected on more than 190 woody hosts in Florida. Florida distribution: Broward, Collier, Dade, Hendry, Indian River, Lee, Martin, Monroe, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties. The world distribution includes Sri Lanka, India, and the Bahamas.

RELATED LINKS:

UF Pest Alerts (<http://entomology.ifas.ufl.edu/pestalert/>)

UF Featured Creatures (http://entomology.ifas.ufl.edu/creatures/orn/scales/lobate_lac.htm)

UF Tropical Research and Education Center: Lobate Lac Scale (<http://trec.ifas.ufl.edu/mannion/pdfs/LobateLacScale.pdf>)

UF Extension: Lobate Lac Scale (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in471>)



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Adam H. Putnam, Commissioner



The lac scale insect on host stems of cocoplum.



Large scales showing the hole through which honeydew is ejected and the “fat bow tie” appearance.



Adult and nymph resinous case of *Paratachardina pseudolobata*.



Typical resinous cases of *Paratachardina pseudolobata*.