

LATANIA SCALE, *HEMIBERLESIA LATANIAE* (SIGNORET)
(HOMOPTERA: COCCOIDEA: DIASPIDIDAE)¹

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INTRODUCTION: *Hemiberlesia lataniae* (Signoret) was originally described as *Aspidiotus lataniae* by Signoret (1869:124) from a fan palm in the genus *Latania*. This scale insect is one of the most common pests from tropical to temperate regions of the world. In Florida it is very common and occurs on a wide range of host plants.

DESCRIPTION: This scale occurs on any aerial part of the plant, but according to Ferris (1938:241) is most commonly found on the bark. The female armor (fig. 1) is 1.5 mm in diameter, circular, and very convex with the exuviae toward one side, thus giving the armor a tilted appearance. Armor color varies considerably, but usually is grayish to light brown. The exuviae is dark brown to pale brown. Male armor (fig. 2) is similar to female in color, but more elongate and less convex in shape.



Fig. 1. *Hemiberlesia lataniae*, female (35x)

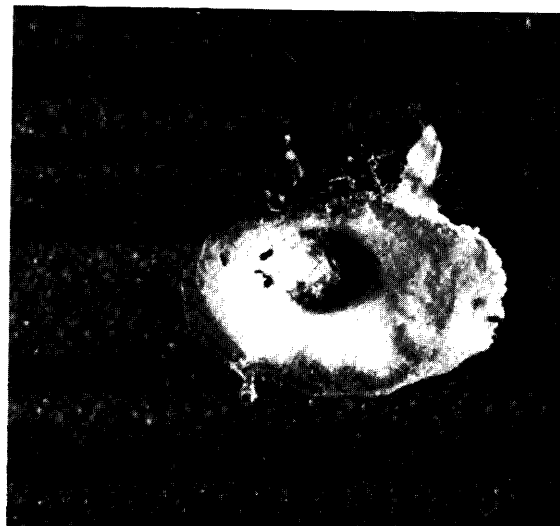


Fig. 2. *Hemiberlesia lataniae*, male (22x)

SURVEY AND DETECTION:

1. Scales may be found throughout the year.
2. Inspect visually around leaf scars on stem, at the base of petioles, on fruit, and leaves.
3. Submit mature adult female specimens, on the host, in a plastic bag or envelope.

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DISTRIBUTION: This scale insect occurs throughout the temperate to tropical areas of the world. It is recorded from most of the United States and all but a few northern and panhandle counties of Florida, but probably occurs in all counties.

HOSTS: The host list of this scale insect in Florida contains over 300 plant species (Dekle 1976:194). Most commonly I see this insect on *Beaucarnea recurvata* Lem. (pony-tail palm).

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE: This insect is a serious pest of palms and many other ornamental plants. All scale insects cause damage by removing large quantities of plant sap. Since this and other scale insects may be somewhat cryptic, large populations can occur before they are noticed. Therefore, it is important that regular inspections for scale insects be made.

CONTROL: According to Dekle (1976:92) this scale is a host of several parasitic wasps, and they usually keep it under control. Parasites reported in Florida are *Aphytis* spp. and *Thysanus* spp. Chemical controls as recommended by the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, include Malathion, Diazinon, and the systemic insecticide dimethoate. For rate of application consult the pesticide label or your local cooperative extension agent.

LITERATURE CITED:

- Dekle, G. W. 1976. Florida armored scale insects. Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry. Arthropods of Florida and neighboring land areas 3:1-345; 280 fig.
- Ferris, F. G. 1938. Atlas of the scale insects of North America. 2:serial nos. 137-268, illus. California, Stanford University Press.
- Signoret, V. 1869. Essai sur les cochenilles ou gallinsectes. Part 4. Ann. Ent. Soc. France. (IV) 9:109-38. 4 fig.