Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Pink wax scale (271)

Photo 1. Adult pink wax scales, *Ceroplastes rubens,* along the midrib of a gardenia leaf.

Photo 2. General view of pink wax scale, *Ceroplastes rubens,* infestation on gardenia showing the blackening of the leaves due to sooty mould fungal growth.

Photo 3. Close up of Photo 1 showing the pink wax scales, *Ceroplastes rubens,* and the sooty moulds on the leaves of gardenia.

Photo 4. The "mealybug destroyer", *Cryptolaemus montrouzieri*.

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. In tropics and sub-tropics. Common on about 80 plant families, particularly fruit and forest trees, and herbaceous ornamentals, but also ferns, orchids and palms. Citrus and mango are the main hosts. An important pest.
- Eggs laid under females. “Crawlers” disperse, settle - often along midribs - moult and feed on sap, with excess expelled as honeydew. Damage by feeding and by sooty moulds growing on honeydew excreta and blackening leaves.
- Natural enemies: parasitoid wasps, but ants interfere with control by wasps and ladybeetles.
- Spread by crawlers on wind, and in the nursery trade.
- Cultural control: check nursery plants are free of scales; prune infested branches; destroy ants (hot water).
- Chemical control: soap, white or horticultural oils; or synthetic pyrethroids for ant control.

Common Name

Pink wax scale, red wax scale

Scientific Name

Ceroplastes rubens

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Information from Pink wax scale (2012) Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Queensland Government. (https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/plants/fruit-and-vegetables/a-z-list-of-horticultural-insect-pests/pink-wax-scale); and from Malumphy C, Eyre D (2011) Pink wax scale (*Ceroplastes rubens*). Plant Pest Fact Sheet. The Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera). (http://fera.co.uk/news/resources/documents/pests-disease-ceroplastesRubens.pdf); and CABI (2016) *Ceroplastes rubens* (red wax scale) Crop Protection Compendium. (www.cabi.org/cpc). Photo 4 Randy Thaman, University of the South Pacific, Fiji.

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