Record of *Aenasius bambawalei* Hayat, a parasitoid of Solenopsis mealybug, in Australia

Moazzem Khan, Adam Quade, Kristy Byers, Zara Hall and Raechelle Grams
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Toowoomba, Queensland.
Correspondence: Moazzem.Khan@daff.qld.gov.au

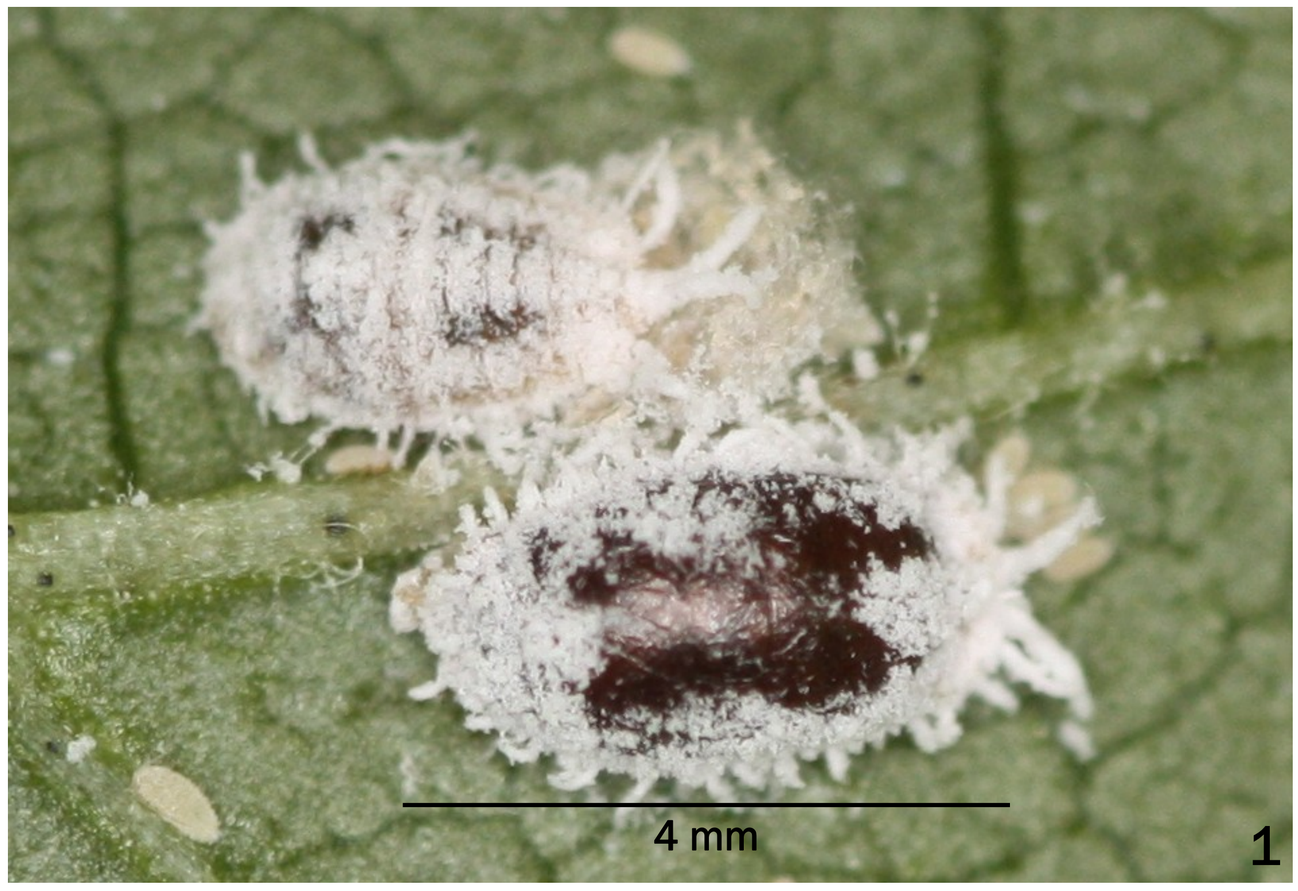
DAFF Entomologists have found a parasitoid of the *Solenopsis* mealybug (*Phenococcus solenopsis*) from cotton at Byee in southern Qld. This is the first known record of this parasitoid in Australia. The wasp was identified as *Aenasius bambawalei* Hayat by Dr John La Salle, CSIRO.

A. bambawalei has played a key role in reducing *Solenopsis* infestations in India since 2008 with parasitism rates ranging from 30-90% .

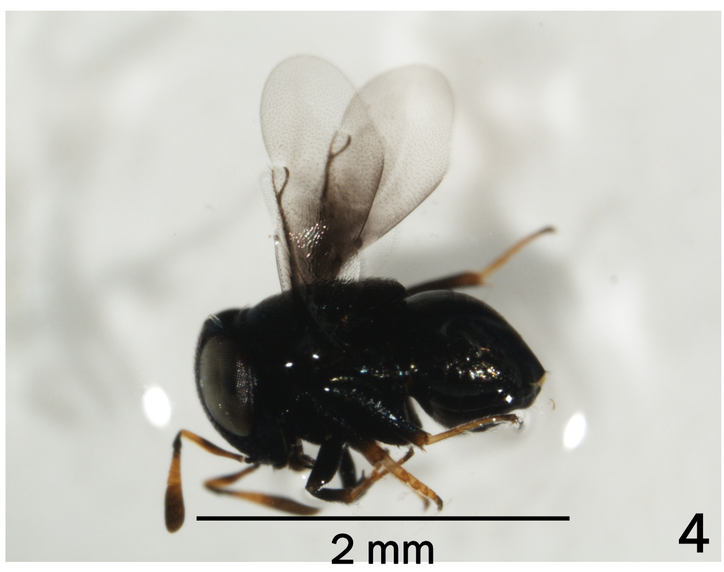
This season only low levels of parasitism were found at Byee. To date, *A. bambawalei* has not been found in any other cotton region.

A. bambawalei could potentially play a major role in the management of the *Solenopsis* mealybug as there are currently no effective insecticide options.

Parasitised mealybugs are easily identified by a dark brown pupal case within the white mealybug. The distribution and potential impact of *A. bambawalei* will be investigated next cotton season.



A parasitised Solenopsis mealybug next to a healthy mealybug (picture 1 & 3). A fully developed wasp visible in a dissected pupal case (picture 2).



Aenasius bambawalei Hayat females (picture 4) have club-shaped, striped antennae. The smaller and slimmer males have black sickle-shaped antennae (picture 5).
If you suspect you have found this parasitoid please contact DAFF Queensland Entomology Toowoomba.

Australian Government
Cotton Research and Development Corporation

Queensland Government