

The black willow aphid *Pterocomma salicis* (L., 1758) (Hemiptera, Aphididae) in Norway

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The black willow aphid *Pterocomma salicis* is recorded from Norway for the first time. A colony was photographed and 45 specimens were collected 12 June 2004 in Folldal municipality, Hedmark (HEN). The locality is situated close to the southern shore of the river Folla, right north of Solvang (EIS 71), approximately 890 m altitude. The colony was found on 2–3 year old twigs of *Salix glauca*, which seems to be a new foodplant for the species.

Key words: Black willow aphid, *Pterocomma salicis*, Hemiptera, Aphididae, Norway.

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The aphid subfamily Pterocommatinae is represented by three genera in N Europe. One of these, *Pterocomma* Buckton, 1879, is represented by six species, where all are associated with different species of *Salix* and *Populus* (Heie 1986). *P. salicis* is the most remarkable of these, with a rather big size, black ground colour with grey and white wax powdered spots, and with bright red sipunculi. (Figure 1). This species is here reported from Norway for the first time.

THE NORWEGIAN RECORD

A colony of *Pterocomma salicis* was photographed 12 June 2004 in Folldal municipality, Hedmark (HEN), by the junior author (Figure 1). The locality is situated close to the southern shore of the river Folla, right north of Solvang UTM32V [WGS84]NP365952 (EIS 71), approximately 890 m altitude. The colony was found on 2–3 year old twigs of *Salix glauca* (Figure 1).

Seven alate ♀♀, 21 apterous ♀♀ and 17 nymphs (all ♀♀) were collected (leg. K. Rolseth), and these are preserved in the insect collections at the Natural History Museum in Oslo.

BIOLOGY AND DISTRIBUTION

Pterocomma salicis is reported to attack a variety of *Salix* spp. Heie (1986) mentions ten different species including *S. viminalis*, *S. fragilis*, *S. caprea* and *S. repens*, but not *S. glauca*. The colonies use to attack two year old twigs where they suck phloem fluids through the bark (Heie 1986, Sipura 2002). The colonies are visited by ants, and the aphids appear to benefit strongly from their presence (Sipura 2002). *Myrmica rubra* (L., 1758) and *Formica aquilonia* Yarrow, 1955 are two of the ant species associated with *P. salicis*.

The females occur in both apterous and alate forms, while the males are only apterous (Heie 1986).

The species is common and widespread all over Sweden, from Skåne (Sk) in the south, to Torne Lappmark (T.Lpm.) in the north (Heie 1986). It is also rather common and widely distributed both in Denmark and Finland. The distribution goes further through Europe south to Spain, and eastwards through C and N Asia to Mongolia (Heie 1986). It is also found in N America, and is regarded as an invasive species to New Zealand (El-Sayed & Suckling 2004).



Figur 1. A colony of *Pterocomma salicis* on a twig of *Salix glauca*; Follidal (HEN). Photo: Kjetil Rolseth.

P. salicis must have a quite wide distribution in Norway too, and it is surprising that this remarkable species has been completely overlooked in Norway until now.

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