

SCIENTIFIC NOTE

**FIRST RECORD OF THE ASIAN HORNTAIL,
ERIOTREMEX FORMOSANUS (HYMENOPTERA:
SIRICIDAE), IN ARKANSAS, U.S.A.¹**Michael D. Warriner²

A total of 15 species of siricid woodwasps (Hymenoptera: Siricidae) have been recorded from the eastern United States (Smith, 1979, Smith and Schiff, 2002, Hoebeke et al., 2005, Schiff et al., 2006). Three of these species have been accidentally introduced from countries outside of North America. Woodwasps are often inadvertently transported within the wood of crates and pallets. The larvae of most woodwasp species bore within the wood of weakened and dying trees (Smith, 1979). Host preferences of larvae are broadly differentiated along subfamily lines, with Tremicinae associated with angiosperms and Siricinae with gymnosperms (Smith and Schiff, 2002, Schiff et al., 2006). Upon oviposition into woody plant tissues, female woodwasps inject basidiomycetous fungi. Developing larvae feed on the fungi and digested woody tissue (Schiff et al., 2006).

Native to Japan, Laos, Taiwan, and Vietnam (Togashi and Hirashima, 1982, Smith, 1996), *Eriotremex formosanus* (Matsumura), the Asian horntail, was first reported in the United States by Smith (1975) from specimens collected in 1975 from southern Alabama. Later, Smith (1996) reported earlier records for 1974 from Florida and Georgia. *Eriotremex formosanus* has also been recorded from Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Texas (Smith, 1996). Most occurrences have been from locations along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, with a smaller number of records further inland. Given that some of the earliest records for *E. formosanus* in the United States are near military bases, Smith (1996) speculated that heavy traffic between southeastern Asia and the United States during and after World War II may have provided the avenue for this species introduction.

On 6 October 2006, I collected a single female *E. formosanus* from a bottomland hardwood forest within Benson Creek Natural Area, Monroe County, Arkansas. The specimen was found dead on a dying sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua* Linnaeus), its ovipositor firmly sunk into the tree's bark. The specimen was removed and deposited into the University of Arkansas Arthropod Museum. The tree on which this individual was found, had been girdled by chainsaw in August 2006 and was exhibiting signs of stress and insect attack. This record extends the range of *E. formosanus* 370 km (230 miles) inland to the northeast from the nearest published locality in Desoto Parish, Louisiana (Smith, 1996).

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Larval hosts of *E. formosanus* in its native range are currently not known. Its subfamilial inclusion in the Tremicinae suggests it is likely associated with angiosperms. In this country, *E. formosanus* has been recorded primarily from hardwoods with smaller numbers of records from conifer species (Smith, 1996). Like most native woodwasps, this species seems to be associated with dying and dead trees and therefore, probably does not represent a significant economic threat to the wood products industry.

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