

Pest Fact Sheet

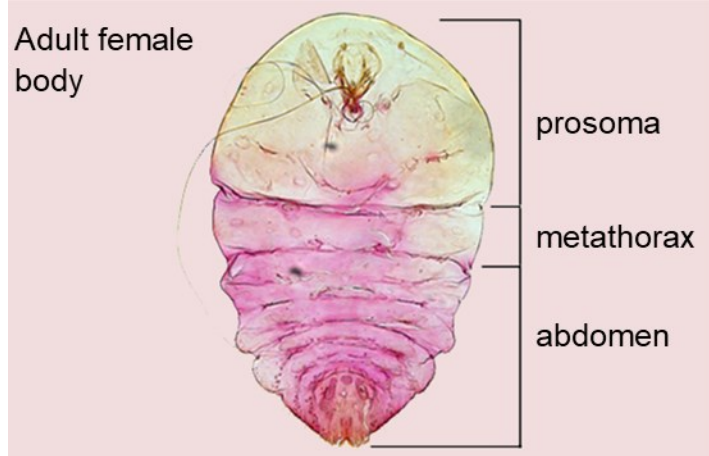
Introduction: Cycad aulacaspis scale was detected in the environment in California for the first time between January and March 2023 on cycads (*Cycas pectinata* Buch.-Ham, *C. revoluta* Thunb., *C. rumphii* Miq., and *Cycas* sp.; Cycadaceae) at multiple locations in the cities of Oceanside and San Diego, San Diego County.

Distribution: Native to SE Asia, its distribution also includes several countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central and North America and Oceania; it is established in the USA in Florida and Hawaii, where it is considered a serious pest.

Description: Adult females have a bright white circular to oyster-shaped scale cover, body and eggs are pinkish orange. This species can be distinguished from other armored scales occurring on cycads in California by the shape of the adult female body which is widest at the level of the swollen prosoma and by the presence of immature males with white, elongate, parallel-sided and ridged covers (in other scales on cycads in California the female body is widest at the abdomen and immature males are unknown or have a smooth white cover).

Biology: This species reproduces sexually and each female can lay more than 100 eggs which hatch in 8–12 days, with the life cycle from egg to adult female taking 28 days. In warm climates it breeds continuously with several generations per year.

Hosts and economic importance: Hosts are limited to cycads of eight genera in three families (Cycadaceae, Stangeriaceae, and Zamiaceae). The scales develop mainly on the undersides of leaves, but in heavy infestations the entire aerial portion of the cycad can be encrusted with scales, and sometimes also the roots. Feeding causes chlorosis, growth distortion, and stunning, dieback followed by defoliation, and heavy infestations can kill the plants in a few months.



References:

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