

Mexican Bromeliad Weevil Report

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Production of fly puparia in the Honduran colony is functioning at a high level of excellence. Fly puparia shipped to Ft. Pierce totaled 390 in four consignments. The relatively low number of shipments was due to hot weather during October (poor adult fly emergence results when contents are overheated during transport) and the holiday season in December. However, shipments are expected to occur every two weeks from January to May 2008.

The Ft. Pierce colony is healthy. Weekly production of puparia was 142, with a maximum of 233; in December, over 800 puparia were produced. Average daily emergence of adult flies is about 14, which provides adequate numbers for colony maintenance and field releases.

October 2007. On 5 October, 105 flies (52 females, 53 males) were released at Highlands Hammock State Park with authorization from the Park Service of Florida's Department of Environmental Protection. On 12 October, 112 flies (59 females, 53 males) were released at the Loxahatchee NWR, the second release for that site. Reporters from several newspapers were present together with Channel 5 television, congressman Ron Klein, and a couple of dozen school children. On 26 October, a second release was made at the Enchanted Forest, of 117 flies (58 females, and 59 males).

November 2007. On 16 November, 51 flies (29 females and 22 males) were released at Miller Tract of the Savannas Preserve State Park, St. Lucie County, with authorization from the Park Service of Florida's Department of Environmental Protection. On 21 November, a second release was made at the Big Cypress, consisting of 109 flies (61 females, 48 males).

December 2007. Howard Frank gave a talk on the weevil project on 7 December at the Exotic Species Workshop in Naples. Following a tip heard then, Jim Fisher and Mike Owen visited Collier-Seminole State Park on 11 December. They found 3 adults, 4 pupae, and 6 larvae of *M. callizona*, mostly from large *Tillandsia utriculata* and a few *T. fasciculata*. This is the first record for that park because no weevils were found there in June 2006. On 14 December, a third release was made at Lake Rogers Park, of 93 flies (47 females, 46 males).

Howard Frank, Dennis Giardina, and Tim Andrus planned a trip in early November to Guatemala in search of additional biological control agents. They bought airline tickets and obtained the necessary Guatemala collection and export permits. Their long-awaited USDA-APHIS importation permit was denied two days before their flight. The reason stated for denial is that USDA-APHIS inspectors must inspect the Ft Pierce quarantine facility after repairs to its sterilization system.