

Byrsonima crassifolia (Malpighiaceae): new alternate host to carambola fruit fly in Brazil

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ABSTRACT: Fruits of *Byrsonima crassifolia* (Malpighiaceae) are reported for the first time as hosts of *Bactrocera carambolae* (Diptera: Tephritidae) in Brazil.

Keywords: *Bactrocera carambolae*, quarantine pest, Amazon, murici.

Byrsonima crassifolia (Malpighiaceae): novo hospedeiro alternativo para mosca-da-carambola no Brasil

RESUMO: Frutos de *Byrsonima crassifolia* (Malpighiaceae) são registrados pela primeira vez como hospedeiros de *Bactrocera carambolae* (Diptera: Tephritidae) no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: *Bactrocera carambolae*, praga quarentenária, Amazônia, murici.

The carambola fruit fly [*Bactrocera carambolae* Drew & Hancock, 1994 (Diptera: Tephritidae)] is native to Southeast Asia and is considered an invading species in South America, where it is found in Suriname, Guyana, French Guiana, and Brazil (CLARKE et al., 2005; GODOY et al., 2011). In Brazil, *B. carambolae* was reported in the extreme North of the country in 1996, in the municipality of Oiapoque, state of Amapá. It is currently considered a “quarantine pest present in the country”, given its distribution in a localized area under official control (GODOY et al., 2011). This is a phytosanitary problem of extreme relevance to Brazil, once the carambola fruit fly has brought major economic consequences to fruit-exporting countries on account of the quarantine restrictions imposed by importers (MALAVASI, 2001).

Over 100 species of host plants have been reported for *B. carambolae* (MALAVASI, 2001; SAUERS-MÜLLER, 2005). In Brazil, specifically in the state of Amapá, Silva et al. (2011) have reported the following hosts: *Psidium guajava* (L.), *Rollinia mucosa* (Jacq.) Baill., *Spondias mombin* L., *Malpighia emarginata* D. C., *Pouteria caimito* (Ruiz & Pav.) Radlk., and *Averrhoa carambola* L. More recently, Lemos et al. (2014), also in the state of Amapá, reported additional hosts: *Mangifera indica* L. (cv. 'Tommy Atkins'), *Syzygium malaccense* (L.) Merr. & L. M. Perry, *Manilkara zapota* (L.) P. Royen, *Capsicum chinense* Jacq., *Chrysobalanus icaco* L., *Eugenia stipitata* Mc Vaughe, and *Pouteria macrophylla* (Lam.) Eyma. So, at present there are 13 known hosts of *B. carambolae* in Brazil. Although collections have been made in native forest areas, it should be noted that all reports of *B. carambolae* hosts have been based on fruits collected in urban or rural areas that have been altered by human activity. This is consistent with the findings of Vijayasegaran et al. (1991) and Sauers-Müller (2010), which have stated that the species is rarely observed in undisturbed tropical forests.

Knowing the complex of host fruits of *B. carambolae* in Brazil is vital to the success of control techniques applied by phytosanitary defense authorities in the country. During the collection of potential fruit fly hosts in the urban area of Macapá (00°00'08'S and 51°05'27'W), state of Amapá, a sample of *Byrsonima crassifolia* (L.) Kunth (Malpighiaceae) was collected (481 fruits, 750.2 g) on 27/Jan/2014. A total of 16 Tephritidae puparia were obtained from that sample (infestation rate of 21.3 puparia/kg of fruit), from which nine adults of *B. carambolae* emerged (5♀, 4♂). This is the first report of carambola fruit fly on *B. crassifolia*.

In Brazil, *B. crassifolia* (Figure 1) is popularly known as “muruci” or “murici”. The species is native to the Amazon region. The fruits are small globose drupes with fleshy yellow mesocarp and characteristic flavor and aroma. They are consumed fresh or in juices, jams, liquors, and sweets (DONADIO et al., 2002; LORENZI et al., 2006). The pharmacological properties of *B. crassifolia* include bactericidal, fungicidal, anti-inflammatory and antidepressant effects (MALDINI et al., 2009; HERRERA-RUIZ et al., 2011).

Byrsonima crassifolia has already been reported as a host of *Anastrepha* (Tephritidae) and *Neosilba* (Lonchaeidae) species in the state of Amapá, with low rates of infestation. Pereira et al. (2008) have reported infestations of *B. crassifolia* by *Anastrepha striata* Schiner, *Anastrepha obliqua* (Macquart), and *Anastrepha fraterculus* (Wiedemann). Jesus-Barros et al. (2012) have reported *A. fraterculus* and *A. striata* on *B. crassifolia*. Adaime et al. (2012) have observed *Neosilba zadolicha* McAlpine & Steyskal and *Neosilba bella* Strikis & Prado on this host plant.

This new report expands the list of carambola fruit fly hosts in Brazil to 14 plant species. Studies on the temporal distribution of *Bactrocera carambolae* on *Byrsonima crassifolia* are required for a better understanding of how the fruit fly uses this food resource.



Figure 1. *Byrsonima crassifolia* tree in which fruits infested by *Bactrocera carambolae* were collected. Macapá, Brazil. January 2014. Photos A and C: Cristiane R. Jesus-Barros; Photo B: Orimax M. Cruz.

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