Acarological Studies
Vol 8 (2): e1929886
doi: 10.47121/acarolstud.1929886

RESEARCH NOTE

Occurrence of *Eotetranychus libocedri* (McGregor) (Acari: Tetranychidae) in Syria: a new record for the country

Mahran ZEITY

Latakia Center of Scientific Agricultural Research, General Commission for Scientific Agricultural Research, Damascus, Syria
e-mail: mzma2009@gmail.com

Received: 14 April 2026 Accepted: 23 June 2026 Available online: 27 June 2026

ABSTRACT: Specimens of *Eotetranychus libocedri* (McGregor, 1936) were identified from two samples of the conifer ornamental plant *Platycladus orientalis*, collected from Kasap and Bsnada, Latakia city, Syria. This is a new record of this species from Syria. Dorsal view of female and male aedeagus of the species have been provided.

Keywords: Acari, spider mite, Syria, new distribution record, conifer host
Zoobank: https://zoobank.org/6EA9BC63-C064-446F-A2E2-863F75210E15

For a long time, *Eotetranychus libocedri* was not recorded outside its type locality, United States; however, it has recently been reported from several neighbouring countries, the first from Mexico (Estebanes Gonzalez and Baker, 1968) followed by more recent records from Türkiye (Yeşilayer and Çobanoğlu, 2015), Hungary (Kontschán et al., 2018), Kyrgyzstan (Kamayev, 2023), Russia (Kamayev, 2024; Kamayev and Karpun, 2024), Uzbekistan (Kamayev et al., 2024) and Serbia (Stojnić et al., 2026). To date, this species has been reported from eight countries all around the world on 17 host plant species, most of which belong to the plant family Cupressaceae.

A total 26 spider mites species have been reported from Syria, of which three species belong to the genus *Eotetranychus* (Migeon and Dorkeld, 2025), and only one species, *Oligonychus coniferarum*, has been reported on conifer plants, specifically on *Platycladus orientalis* (Zeity and Srinivasa, 2019).

This study aims to document the first record of *Eotetranychus libocedri* in Syria based on newly collected material.

Collected samples were examined, and mites were extracted directly from the infested branches using a fine brush. Each mite individual was mounted using Hoyer's medium on glass slides. Male individuals were oriented in lateral position for further identification of species using male aedeagus. The mounted slides were labelled on the right side with collection locality, collection date, habitat, host plant and collector. The slides were kept in a hot air oven at 45 ºC for 2-3 weeks. The material examined consists of two males and four females, ex. *Platycladus orientalis*, coll. Mahran Zeity, Kasap, Latakia, (35°54'16.6"N, 35°59'26.5"E), July, 2023; two males and three females, ex. *Platycladus orientalis*, coll. Mahran Zeity, Bsnada, Latakia, Syria (35°32'42.0"N, 35°48'25.1"E) August, 2023. The mounted mite specimens were identified using an Olympus CH20 light microscope, following the relevant literature (McGregor, 1950; Pritchard and Baker, 1955; Baker and Tuttle, 1994). For setae nomenclature Lindquist (1985) was followed. All examined materials were preserved in the collections of Latakia Centre for Scientific Agricultural Research, Syria.

Eotetranychus libocedri (McGregor, 1936)

Tetranychus libocedri McGregor, 1936: 771.

Type host: *Calocedrus decurrens*.

Type locality: USA.

Mononychus libocedri (McGregor, 1936). Wainstein, 1960: 199.

Platytetranychus libocedri (McGregor, 1936). Tuttle and Baker, 1968: 106.

Eotetranychus libocedri (McGregor, 1936). Seeman et al., 2017: 495.

Dorsocentral hysterosomal setae, very short and tapering. Dorsal propodosomal setae considerably variable in length, and some variation in the humeral and dorsolateral hysterosomal setae present. Dorsocaudal hysterosomal setae often conspicuously longer than dorsocentral setae (Fig. 1). Male aedeagus straight, simply narrowing to an emarginated tip (Fig. 2). Tibia I of the female bearing nine tactile setae, and tarsus I with five tactile (and sometimes one sensory) setae proximal to the duplex setae. Tarsus I of the male bearing four tactile and two sensory setae proximal to the duplex setae. Two tactile and one sensory setae ventral to the duplexes, appearing to be slightly proximal.

This species is closely related to *Eotetranychus thujae* (McGregor, 1950), by bearing short dorsocentral hysterosomal setae. However, the shape of these setae (enlarged toward the distal end in *E. thujae*), as well as female leg chaetotaxy and shape of male aedeagus, provide reliable diagnostic characters for separating the two species. Additional differences include variation in the length of the second and third dorsal propodosomal setae, whe eas in female, tibia I bears 9 and 7 setae (*E. libocedri* and *E. thujae*), while tarsus I with 5 and 3 (or 4) tactile setae

DergiPark ACADEMIC

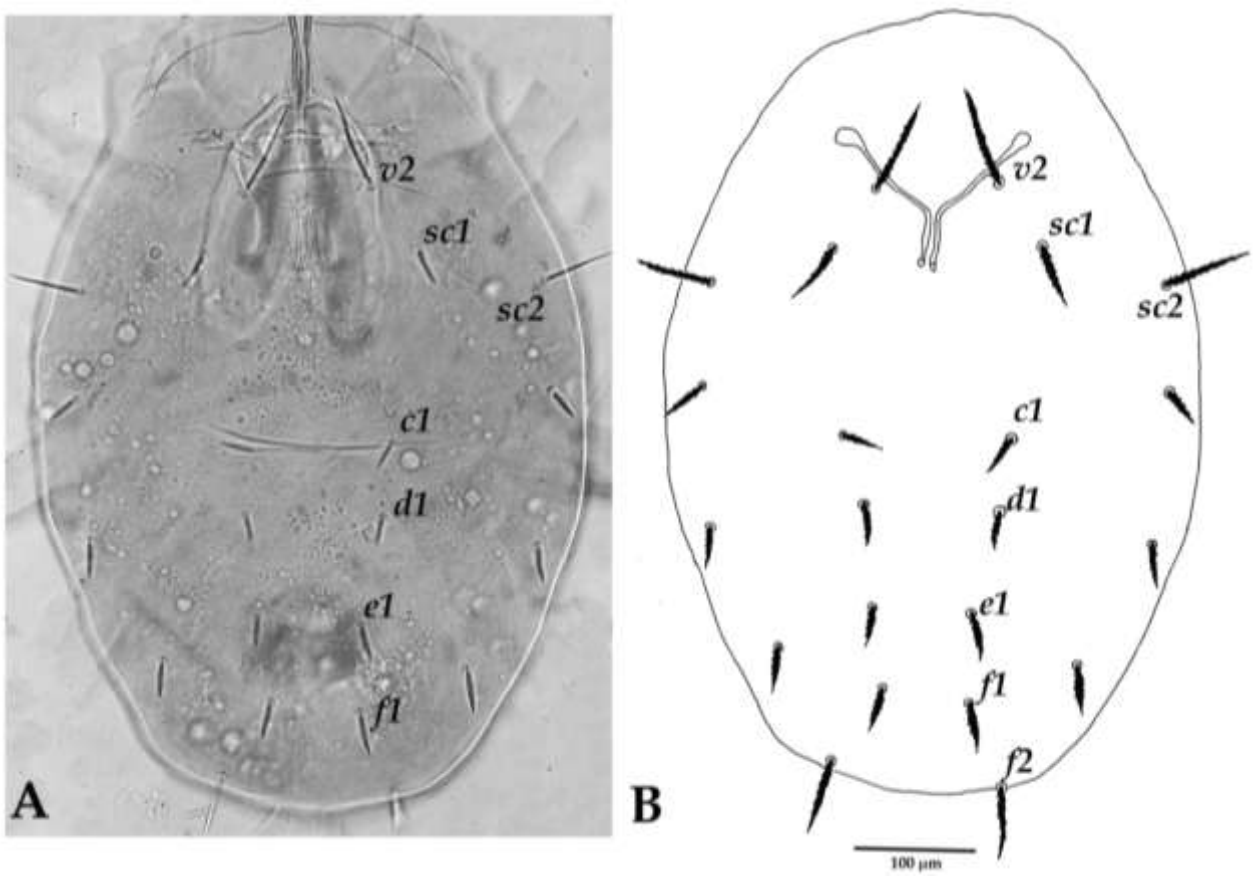

Figure 1. *Eotetranychus libocedri* (female). Dorsal view of body: A) Photograph, B) Outline figure.

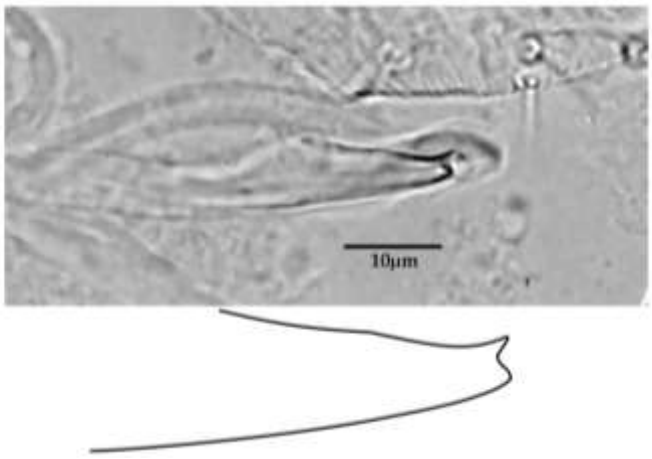

Figure 2. *Eotetranychus libocedri* (male). Aedeagus: Photograph (upper) and outline drawing (lower).

proximal to proximal duplex setae in *E. libocedri* and *E. thujae*, respectively. The *Eotetranychus libocedri* was reported from 13 different host plant species belong to the plant family Cupressaceae. However, *Eotetranychus libocedri* is one of 14 spider mite species associated with Platycladus orientalis. Presence of *Eotetranychus libocedri* on *Platycladus orientalis* is causing rusty appearance of infested trees, hence, it may be consider as a potential pest of conifer trees in national and public gardens. Reporting of this species from two neighbouring countries (Syria and Türkiye) and its association with most used plant *Platycladus orientalis* for ornamental purpose may reveal probable wide distribution of this species out of reported countries.

Statement of ethics approval

Not applicable.

Funding

Not supported by any foundation.

Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements

To the General Commission for Scientific Agricultural Research, Damascus, Syria.

REFERENCES

Baker, E.W. and Tuttle, D.M. 1994. A guide to the spider mites (Tetranychidae) of the United States. Indira Publishing House, West Bloomfield, USA, 347 pp.

Estebanes Gonzalez, M.L. and Baker, E.W. 1968. Arañas rojas de México (Acarina: Tetranychidae). Annales de la Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Biológicas, 15, 61-133. [In Spanish]

Kamayev, I.O. 2023. New data on spider mites (Prostigmata: Tetranychidae) from Kyrgyzstan. Acarina, 31 (2): 271-273.
doi: 10.21684/0132-8077-2023-31-2-271-273

Kamayev, I. 2024. A new record of *Eotetranychus libocedri* (McGregor, 1936) (Prostigmata, Tetranychidae) from Russia. Acarologia, 64 (1): 40-42.
doi: 10.24349/4tyf-qbpv

Kamayev, I.O. and Karpun, N.N. 2024. A contribution to the knowledge of the spider mite fauna (Prostigmata: Tetranychidae) of the North Caucasus, Russia. Acarina, 32 (1): 35-42.
doi: 10.21684/0132-8077-2024-32-1-35-42

Kamayev, I.O., Anorbayev, A.R. and Obidjanov, D.A. 2024. Review of the spider mite fauna of Uzbekistan, with new records (Prostigmata: Tetranychidae). Acarina, 32 (2): 157-167.
doi: 10.21684/0132-8077-2024-32-2-157-167

Kontschán, J., Kiss, E. and Ripka, G. 2018. Alien, non-indigenous spider mites and flat mites (Acari: Tetranychidae and Tenuipalpidae) in Hungary. In: XV International Congress of Acarology. Sullivan G.T. and Ozman-Sullivan S.K. (Eds). Bilkon Turizm Organizasyon Yayıncılık Ltd. Şti., Antalya, Türkiye, p. 213.

McGregor, E.A. 1950. Mites of the family Tetranychidae. American Midland Naturalist, 44: 257-420.
doi: 10.2307/2421963

Migeon, A. and Dorkeld, F. 2025. Spider mites web: a comprehensive database for the Tetranychidae. Available from https://www1.montpellier.inrae.fr/CBGP/spmweb (Last accessed: 7 August 2025).

Lindquist, E.E. 1985. External anatomy. In: Spider mites: their biology, natural enemies and control. Helle, W. and Sabelis, M.W. (Eds). World Crop Pests Vol. 1A. Elsevier Science Publishers, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 3-28.

Pritchard A.E. and Baker E.W. 1955. A revision of the spider mite family Tetranychidae. In: Memoirs Series. Vol. 2. Pacific Coast Entomological Society, San Francisco, USA, 1-472.
doi: 10.5962/bhl.title.150852

Seeman, O.D., Beard, J.J. and Zhang, L. 2017. A new Australian species of *Eotetranychus* (Acari: Tetranychidae) from buck spinifex *Triodia mitchelli* (Poaceae), intraspecific variation in *Eotetranychus*, and the synonymy of *Platytetranychus* with *Eotetranychus*. Zootaxa, 4324: 491-517.
doi: 10.11646/zootaxa.4324.3.5

Stojnić, B., Mladenović, K., Vidović, B., Anđelković, N. and Milanović, S. 2026. First records of *Eotetranychus libocedri* (McGregor, 1936) and *E. thujae* (McGregor, 1950) (Acari: Tetranychidae) from Serbia. Diversity, 18: 371.
doi: 10.3390/d18060371

Tuttle, D.M. and Baker, E.W. 1968. Spider mites of southwestern United States, a revision of the family Tetranychidae. The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, USA, 143 pp.

Wainstein, B.A. 1960. Tetranychoid mites of Kazakhstan (with revision of the family). Trudy Nauchno-Issledovatel'skogo Instituta Zashchity Rastenii Kazakhstanskoy SSR, 5: 1-276.

Yeşilayer, A. and Çobanoğlu S. 2015. Tetranychidae (Acari: Prostigmata) species from parks and ornamental plants in Istanbul, Turkey. Gaziosmanpaşa Bilimsel Araştırma Dergisi, 11: 90-98.

Zeity, M. and Srinivasa, N. 2019. Updated contribution to the knowledge of Tetranychoidea (Acari: Tetranychidae, Tenuipalpidae) from Syria with reinstatement of genus Nuciforaella Vacante. Systematic and Applied Acarology, 24 (4): 529-543.
doi: 10.11158/saa.24.4.1

Edited by: Salih Doğan
Reviewed by: Two anonymous referees

Citation: Zeity, M. 2026. Occurrence of *Eotetranychus libocedri* (McGregor) (Acari: Tetranychidae) in Syria: a new record for the country. Acarological Studies, 8 (2): e1929886