

Summary

Spittlebugs are damaging pests of *Bothriochloa pertusa* (colosoana) and other forage grasses on the Caribbean Coast of Colombia where despite their pest status, this insect complex has not been characterized. Studies were carried out to summarize the known diversity and distribution of grass-feeding spittlebugs in this ecoregion, and to describe their life stages. Museum collections and field surveys confirmed the presence of two species, *Aeneolamia reducta* (Lallemand) and *A. lepidior* (Fowler). Both species were detected in the

Caribbean coast departments of Atlántico, Bolívar, Cesar, Córdoba, Magdalena, and Sucre but not Guajira. *Aeneolamia reducta* was more widespread than *A. lepidior*, reported in 46 versus 13 of the 159 municipalities in those six departments. Eggs, nymphs, and adults were described with morphological measurements for differentiating the life stages. Confirming certain trends in this pest complex, *A. reducta* and *A. lepidior* exhibit four morphologically distinct developmental stages of the egg, five nymphal instars distinguished in particular by head capsule width, morphological differentiation of late fifth instars about to molt to adults, and sexual dimorphism in adults expressed as greater size of females. Besides offering new information to strengthen our understanding of the patterns of bioecological variation in the grass-feeding spittlebugs, these results will facilitate recognition of the life stages in support of biology and population studies, and provide baseline information to monitor changes in geographic distribution or invasion of new pest species.