Parasitisation of soft brown scale, *Coccus hesperidum* Howard by an aphelinid wasp, *Coccophagus ceroplastae* (Howard) infesting orchids from Sikkim, India

Rumki Heloise Ch. Sangma*, Dipen Dahal and D. R. Singh

ICAR-National Research Centre for Orchids, Pakyong, Sikkim-737106, India.
E mail:rumkisangma@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT:** *Coccophagus ceroplastae* (Howard) an aphelinid parasitic wasp was found to parasitize populations of the soft brown scale, *Coccus hesperidum* Howard infesting the orchids in Sikkim, India. Parasitization under natural conditions was found to range from 5-45%. This is the first report of *Coccophagus ceroplastae* (Howard) on Soft brown scales on orchids. © 2015 Association for Advancement of Entomology

**KEYWORDS:** *Coccophagus ceroplastae*, endoparasitoids, *Coccoidea*, *Coccus hesperidum*, Orchids

Orchids are one of God’s beautiful creations and have since long been admired by man. Orchidaceae, one of the largest families of flowering plants is no exception to this richness of variety. India alone has contributed nearly 1150 species belonging to 164 genera and many are discovered year after year. Knowing the immense value of orchid, collections from different parts of the country are maintained in the germplasm at National Research Center for Orchids, Pakyong, Sikkim. The place is situated at the elevation of 1300m between 27°4’- 28°7’48” N and 88°58”-88°5’ 25” E longitude experiences average maximum temperature 17-28°C and minimum 6-20°C, maximum relative humidity 81-95 % and minimum 43-73%. Pakyong receives an annual rainfall upto 300 cm. The orchid flowers are well known for their uniqueness in shape, size, colour and scent are exquisitely attractive, normally remain fresh for longer period of time in comparison to other flowers. At our centre the plants are kept under open poly house/partial shade. Under poly house conditions the orchids are subjected to infestations by several insects and non-insects pests.

Soft brown scale, *Coccus hesperidum* belonging to Coccoidea, infests orchids. The adults