

## FIRST REPORT OF *INCISITERMES* CF. *SCHWARZI* (KALOTERMITIDAE) IN THE SOUTHWEST OF COLOMBIA

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Many species of termites have increased their range to urban areas where wood is used as building material for houses, buildings and furniture, therefore, have been considered urban pests. In Colombia, the fauna and problems caused by termites are virtually unknown. There are few reports on inventories in some crops, but no documentation of the presence of insects as a problem in urban areas in the country so far. The termite *Incisitermes schwarzi* (Banks) is part of the group known as dry wood termites, is known in the United States, Mexico and some Caribbean islands (Cuba). In Colombia, on 21 February 2009, a large colony of *I. cf. schwarzi* was observed at the Marine Biological Station of the Universidad del Valle (3°53'18.8"N, 77°1'44.9" W, 41 m above sea level), located in the city of Buenaventura, department of Valle, in the southwest of the country. Samples of soldiers and pseudoergates that had invaded wooden structures in walls, closets and even mattresses were manually collected. Infested structures are usually found hollow and weakened and fecal pellets can be observed outside. This report extends the distribution of the species *I. schwarzi* which had no previous records for continental South America. The Kalotermitidae was probably introduced to Colombia from Central or North America, through trade in the seaport of Buenaventura considered one of the most important on the Pacific Ocean because of the large volume of cargo handled. This facilitates the introduction of termites come in wooden pallets, which are used as support for the import of household appliances or other goods. It is impossible to obtain a more accurate date for the introduction of this species to Colombia, but given the high degree of infestation observed in 2009, it can be inferred that *I. cf. schwarzi* has been at least a few years in the country. In the genus *Incisitermes* the best known species is *Incisitermes minor* considered pest in the United States, while *I. schwarzi* not have any study of its pest status. Samples of termites were deposited at the Museum of Entomology at Universidad del Valle (MUSENUV) in Cali.

**Key Words** Seaport, urban area, wood