

PEST STATUS OF THE TERMITE, *RHINOTERMES MARGINALIS* (BLATTODEA: RHINOTERMITIDAE), INTRODUCED IN URBAN AREAS IN SOUTHEASTERN BRAZIL

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Abstract *Rhinotermes marginalis* is a Neotropical termite reported as a minor urban pest in northern Brazil. In southeastern Brazil, it occurs as an exotic introduced pest in the cities of Rio de Janeiro/RJ and Vitória/ES. This study aimed to record *R. marginalis* in urban areas of other neighborhoods and municipalities of the southeastern region of Brazil and its damages. Inspections were conducted at residences in the states of Espírito Santo, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Soldiers were preserved in 80% alcohol for identification. Photographs of the damages were taken when foragers were detected. *R. marginalis* damaged MDF cabinet inside a house in Fradinhos neighborhood, Vitória/ES. In Rio de Janeiro, it constructed large tunnels and attacked homes or other buildings in the Alto da Boa Vista and Laranjeiras neighborhoods of the capital and the municipalities of Niterói (Itaipú, Pendotiba, Engenho do Mato and Piratininga neighborhoods), Pinheiral, Campos dos Goytacazes, where it damaged structural timber and/or cardboard, Cachoeiras de Macacu (Papucaia district, where it damaged cardboard packaging of furniture and appliances), and Seropédica (it damaged wood support for orchids). In the Pacheco (São Gonçalo/RJ), Pendotiba and Piratininga (Niterói/RJ) neighborhoods, *R. marginalis* foragers were attracted to in-ground baiting monitoring stations (Sentricon[®]). In the capital of São Paulo, it damaged a wooden bench in backyard in a house in the Chácara Monte Alegre neighborhood, and cardboard boxes on the floor in a house in the Congonhas neighborhood, and in the municipality of Guarujá, it damaged baseboards, jambs and other woods in contact with the masonry of the house, where it transited inside electrical conduits and electric power box, with large tunnels built in walls, rising from the floor to the wooden ceiling. This work expands the record of geographic distribution of *R. marginalis* in Brazil and shows its potential damages in urban areas.

Key words Subterranean termite, xylophagous termite, geographic distribution, urban pest