

**Observations on the Adults of *Micraspis frenata* (Erichson, 1842)
(Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) Feeding on the Pollen of Native and
Non-native Grasses (Poaceae) in Eastern New South Wales,
Australia**

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ABSTRACT

Observations are provided on the feeding by adults on the pollen of six native and non-native grass species, *Chloris gayana* Kunth, *Chloris truncata* R.Br., *Paspalum urvillei* Steud., *Setaria gracilis* Kunth [= *Setaria geniculata* (Lam. Beauv.)], *Sorghum bicolor* (L.) Moench ssp. *bicolor* and *Themeda australis* (R.Br.) Stapf (Poaceae) in the Sydney district, New South Wales., Australia. This species of ladybird beetle has also been recorded feeding on nectar of introduced weeds such as species of *Asclepias* and *Gomphocarpus* (Asclepiadaceae). These plants are not related to grasses. Clearly *M. frenata* is adapted to feeding on a number of food sources and possible preadaptations both to food items and changing environments have led to the evolutionary success of this species.

Key words: Coleoptera, Coccinellidae, *Micraspis frenata*, pollen feeding, native and non-native grasses, Poaceae

INTRODUCTION

The genus *Micraspis* Dejean, 1836 (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) is distributed within the Palaearctic, Oriental and Australian Regions (i.e. from Japan and China, west to India and Africa and east to Melanesia and Australia) (Pope, 1988; Hawkeswood, 1994). The genus contains at least 30 species and is represented in the Australian region by at least 6 species (Pope, 1988). The most common and