

Fossil thrips of the family Uzelothripidae suggest 53 million years of morphological and ecological stability

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The new fossil thrips *Uzelothrips eocenicus* P. Nel and A. Nel sp. nov. (Thysanoptera: Uzelothripidae) is described from two lowermost Eocene amber-preserved specimens (one macropterous and one apterous). The family Uzelothripidae is only known so far from a single extant species, *Uzelothrips scabrosus*. The fossils differ from the extant species only by the antennal segments III and IV, which appear distinctly separated instead of being fused as in the in the extant *U. scabrosus*. Dark-coloured hyphae and conidia of the Dothideomycetes (Ascomycota) which are likely to belong to the sooty moulds (Capnodiales) are attached to the apterous fossil specimen. We consider this arthropod-fungus association not to be accidental since these fungi are also found in extant specimens of these uzelothripids, suggesting very specific long-term interactions and strong habitat specificity.

Key words: Arthropoda, Thysanoptera, Uzelothripidae, fossil fungi, Ascomycota, Capnodiales, sooty moulds, amber, Eocene, France.

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