

Two Seed-feeding Bruchids as Part of an Integrated Approach for the Control of *Prosopis* spp., Mesquite, in South Africa

H.G. Zimmermann

Plant Protection Research Institute, Private Bag X134, Pretoria 0001, South Africa

Prosopis glandulosa, *P. velutina* and some other *Prosopis* spp. have been introduced from North and South America to provide shade and firewood in largely treeless, semi-desert areas of South Africa and also for their nutritious pods which are suitable for stock feed. However, they have now become problem weeds in certain areas occurring as impenetrable thickets which produce large quantities of healthy seeds, promoting further spread. To avoid conflicts-of-interests it was decided to limit biological control to the use of specific seed-feeders that would not reduce the nutritive value of the pods appreciably. The bruchids, *Algarobius prosopis* and *A. bottimeri*, were introduced from North America and released during 1987-90. They are now widely established and destroy up to around 90% of the annual seed crop. This is seen as important for reducing further spread and regeneration after chemical and mechanical clearing or thinning. Intensive utilization of trees is also considered an important component of the integrated control campaign to clear existing infestations or to convert them to usable and manageable densities.
