



Centurion
UNIVERSITY

INSECT PESTS OF MESTHA AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

MESTA HAIRY CATERPILLAR

Euproctis scintillans

Lymantriidae: Lepidoptera

APPEARANCE

- Moth is yellowish with a reddish line and spots on the edges.
- Larva has yellowish brown head and yellow dorsal stripe with a mid dorsal red stripe.
- There are tufts of black hairs dorsally on the first three abdominal segments.

LIFE HISTORY

- Eggs are laid in masses on the undersurface of leaves.
- The egg period is 5-9 days.
- Eggs hatch into larvae and feed on foliage.

- Larva pupates in a cocoon of hairs on the leaves or leaf folds.
- Pupal period lasts for 10-12 days.

SYMPTOMS:

- Heavy defoliation

MANAGEMENT

- Timely sowing at the onset of monsoons, foliar sprays with endosulfan 2 ml/l or methyl demeton 2 ml/l were effective.





MESTA STEM WEEVIL

Alcidodes affaber

Curculionidae: Coleoptera

- This insect is a common pest on malvaceous plants in India infesting bhendi, gogu, *Bombax malabaricum*, *Althae rosea* and *Ficus bengalensis* etc.
- The adult feed on leaf buds, petiols and tender terminal portion. However, serious damage is caused only by the grubs boring into stem and petioles and causing gall like swellings.
- Frass is found through holes made on stems. The infested plant gets stunted. Their flowers and fruiting get retarded considerably.
- A single plant may harbor as many as 12 grubs. This pest is active from September-December.

- The grubs are parasitised by *Aphrastofracon alcidophagus* (Braconidae) and *Zoridescopus* spp (Ichneumonid).



MEALY BUG

Meconellicoccus hirsutus

Pseudococcidae: Hemiptera

- Besides mesta, it also attacks jute, grapevine and guava.
- Sac-like pink coloured females are covered by milky white waxy coating.
- Eggs are laid in masses.
- Upon hatching, crawlers move to succulent parts and suck sap resulting in symptoms like swelling on stem, shortened internodes, bunched top formation as secondary branches arise.
- If growing tips are infested vertical growth is suppressed. Fibre snaps at point of infestation during retting.

- Release of *Cryptolaemus montronzieri* when peak infestation is noticed in sep-oct and foliar spraying with methyl demeton 2ml/l or dimethoate 1.5ml/l is effective.

- **LEAFHOPPERS**

- *Amrasca biguttula biguttula*

- Cicadellidae: Hemiptera

- **APHID**

- *Aphis gossypii*

- Aphididae: Hemiptera