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Biology, seasonal activity of fruit fly (*Bactrocera cucurbitae* Coq.) on pointed gourd (*Trichosanthes dioica* Roxb.) and weather relations

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E-mail: pranab.barma@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

Bactrocera cucurbitae (Coq.) is considered as a serious pest of pointed gourd. Peak incidence of it was obtained in third week of May to first week of June during all the three years of study (i.e. 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10). Studies on biology showed that the incubation, larval, pupal and adult longevity periods were 2 to 5 days, 5 to 7 days, 6 to 9 days, 37 to 41 days in June-July and 4 to 6 days, 16 to 19 days, 17 to 21 days, 23 to 32 days in August-October, respectively. Correlation with individual weather factors revealed that each of maximum and minimum temperature had significant positive correlation ($r = +0.386$ and $+0.501$, respectively) on the population build up of the pest. The relative humidity % of morning hours had significantly negative correlation ($r = -0.451$) and that of evening slightly positive ($r = +0.284$). Rainfall had insignificantly positive ($r = +0.195$), soil temperature significantly positive ($r = +0.555$) and the bright sun shine hours insignificantly positive ($r = +0.103$) effects on the population development.

Keywords: Pointed gourd, fruit fly, biology, incidence, correlation

Introduction

Pointed gourd (*Trichosanthes dioica* Roxb.) has been subjected to damage by cucurbit fruit fly, *Bactrocera cucurbitae* (Coq.) (Chintan *et al.* 2002; Jha *et al.* 2007) limiting the production and productivity of the crop. In India, several reports had been found on this pest. Extent of yield loss caused by the pest to cucurbitaceous vegetables ranged from 30 to 100% depending upon cucurbit species and the season in different parts of the world (Gupta & Verma 1992; Dhillon *et al.* 2005a b c; Shooker *et al.* 2006). The report on infestation of the pest attacking pointed gourd in West Bengal is scanty. Jha *et al.* (2007) observed infestation of fruit fly to the tune of 17% on the crop in the districts of Malda, Murshidabad and Nadia. The female lays eggs in groups under the pericarp of young fruits and after hatching maggots bore into the tissues making cavities and feeding on it. Subsequently fruit rots and maggots jump out making exit holes. It is necessary to have basic information on the incidence of the pest in relation to weather parameters which in turn help us in determining

appropriate time of action and suitable management methods to be adopted. Hence, through the present study, attempt was made to record the biology, periodicity of occurrence and their relations to various abiotic factors.

Materials and Methods

The field experiment on seasonal incidence of fruit fly was done for three consecutive crop growing seasons from 2007-08 to 2009-10, in the plot area of 3m \times 2m with a plant spacing 100cm \times 135cm. All the recommended agronomic practices were followed to raise the crops. The incidence of fruit fly was recorded on the basis of number of fruits damaged by the pest. The maggots per infested fruits were counted. Data were later converted to maggot population per fruit with the following formula (Gupta & Verma 1992)

$$\text{Maggot population per fruit} = \frac{\text{No. of infested fruits} \times \text{No. of maggots per infested fruit}}{\text{Total no. of fruits sampled}}$$

SUSCEPTIBILITY OF WATERMELON GENOTYPES TO FRUIT FLY *BACTROCERA CUCURBITAE* (COQUILLETT)

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ABSTRACT

Host plant resistance is an important component for management of the melon fruit fly, *Bactrocera cucurbitae* (Coquillett) owing to difficulties associated with its chemical and biological control. A total of 27 watermelon varieties/ genotypes were evaluated for their susceptibility to the fruit fly in hot arid region of Rajasthan. The results showed that the varieties/ genotypes viz. percentage of fruit infestation and larval population per fruit varied significantly. Pooled data showed that the varieties/genotypes viz., AHW/BR-60, BSM-1, IC 582909, AHW/BR-9, AHW/BR-137, Durgapura Kesar, AHW/BR-10, AHW/BR-18, AHW/BR-8, AHW/BR-21, AHW/BR-20 and YF-4 can be categorized as susceptible with considerable fruit infestation (55.72%, 59.28%, 53.05%, 67.20%, 60.43%, 61.83%, 63.87%, 63.62%, 59.45%, 59.62%, 62.52% and 55.68%, respectively) and with larval population per fruit viz. 17.12, 17.85, 16.45, 19.23, 17.90, 18.48, 18.38, 18.32, 18.46, 17.57, 17.93 and 17.70, respectively. The varieties/ genotypes Asahi Yamato, AHW/BR-16 and Thar Manak had 12-18% fruit infestation (12.75%, 15.05% and 18.18%, respectively) with 1-1 larval per fruit (10.13, 10.82 and 11.08, respectively) and declared which can be considered resistant. Lower values of host plant susceptibility indices based on fruit infestation (HPSI) were recorded on resistance varieties/ genotypes, viz., Asahi Yamato, AHW/BR-16 and Thar Manak (28.85%, 34.05% and 41.14%, respectively). These could be used as a source of resistance for developing watermelon varieties/ genotypes resistant to fruit fly.

Key words: *Citrullus lanatus*, *Bactrocera cucurbitae*, infestation, density, HPSI

Watermelon [*Citrullus lanatus* (Thunb.) Mansf.] is a popular desert crop and fruit fly, *Bactrocera cucurbitae* (Coquillett) (Diptera: Tephritidae: Dacinae) is its economically important pest. This fruit fly has more than 81 plant species as its hosts (Dhillon *et al.*, 2005a), but plants of family Cucurbitaceae are considered to be its preferred hosts (Allwood *et al.*, 1999). Development of varieties resistant to melon fruit fly is an important component of integrated pest management (Panda and Khush, 1995). But development of watermelon varieties/ genotypes resistant to fruit fly has been limited in India owing to inadequate information on the sources of plant traits associated with resistance. The present study was designed to screen of watermelon varieties/ genotypes for resistance against melon fruit fly in terms of fruit infestation and larval density under field conditions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Twenty seven varieties/ genotypes of watermelon viz., RSS-1, AHW/BR-18, AHW/BR-8, AHW/BR-21, AHW/BR-20, YF-4, AHW/BR-19, AHW/BR-96, YF-5,

Horticultural Science, *Plant Physiology

cucumbers and tomatoes in Hawaii. 4 PP. Biology and identification of trypetid larvae (Diptera: Tephritidae). 1953. 69 pp. It was introduced to the Hawaiian Islands from Japan around 1895. A classification of some larvae and pupar of the Tephritidae (dittera). In the Solomon Islands it has been subjected to an eradication campaign using a combination of bait spray and male annihilation traps. Rear breaths. Hardy's. Figure 2. No other known fruit The larva has this combination of characters, besides other features of the anterior spiracles and pharyngeal-cephalic skeleton (Berg 1979, Chu 1949, Green 1929, Hardy 1949, Phillips 1946, Pruitt 1953). 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California Insect Bulletin California Step 7: 1-117. Reg. Insects unknown in the United States. The larva of the melon fly" is particularly characteristic for having a dark sclerotised horizontal line below the spiral region at end caudal, with a curved ridge on both sides. Journal of Agricultural Research (Washington) 38: Pruitt JH. Chu HF Egg: The egg" pure white, about 2 mm long, elliptical, almost flat on the ventral surface, plusA₂ convex on the dorsal. Leaflet 581. Pupa: The puparium "A" is about 5-6 mm long and varies in color from opaque red or brownish yellow to opaque white, depending on the host. San Salvador organ. In August 2010, several flies were discovered in Kern County, California. Fly of the adult melon, Bactrocera cucurbitae (Coquillett). Adult wing worship. White IM, Elson-Harris MM. Florida Entomologist 90: 1-9. caudal end with paired dorsal papules (D1 and D2) diagonally back each spiracular plate; intermediate papillae as curved crest on each side, with a prominent dark central line under spiracles about a metA road between spiracles and anal lobes, but with I3 on each side of spiracles; L1 at the median edge of caudal ; v Central papules not evident on raised plates; Rear spiracles as three elongated oval openings (length = 3 to 3,5 euro wide) on each kidney-shaped spiracular plate, with dorsal spiracles and lower torque inclined at the center of extremity caudal; numerous interspiracular processes (hairs), at 4 points on each plate, the tips fork; whole and small anal lobes. There could be eight to ten generations a .. Florida Entomologist 87: 481-486. A more technical description of the larva "A" is as follows: Venter with fusiform areas on segments 2 to 11 (2 to 4 are poorly developed); anterior oral carines generally 18-20 in number; Slightly convex front in a side view, with tubules in average number from 18 to 20 and relatively small. Skeleton cephalopharyngeal. 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Figure 5. Figure 3. An intern. Psyllalia fletcheri (Silvestri), a parasitoid of the melon fly Bactrocera cucurbitae (Coquillett). 1929. Figure 8. Shelly TE, Pahio E, Edu J. CAB International. Photograph by Scott, Bauer, USDA. Pretty head and mouth. Like other Bactrocera species, the melon fly can attach flowers, fruits and roots. Melon fly (*Dacus cucurbitae* (Coq.)), pp.

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