



Pacific Pests and Pathogens - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Pepper fruit fly (416)



Photo 1. Larva (maggot) of the pepper fruit fly, *Atherigona orientalis*.



Photo 2. Adult pepper fruit fly, *Atherigona orientalis* (top view).



Photo 3. Adult pepper fruit fly, *Atherigona orientalis* (side view).

Summary

- Worldwide. In Australia and most Pacific island countries.
- Minor pest of brassica, cucurbit, legume, potato, grass families. Also breeds in decaying organic matter. Major hosts: beans, cabbages, cauliflowers, melon, orange, sorghum (causes 'deadhearts'), and tomato.
- Maggots do the damage, but presence does not mean they are the cause.
- Eggs laid under calyx of fruit, in cracks, grooves, or rots caused by physical damage and those of other insects. Maggots white, 4-6 mm long. Pupae dark orange-red. Adults yellowish-grey fly, squarish head, up to 4 mm long, wingspan 3 mm, dark thorax and yellow abdomen.
- Natural enemies: pupal parasitoids.
- Biosecurity: regulated pest in New Zealand.
- Cultural control: avoid use of chicken manure as flies may use it to breed.
- Chemical control: not recommended, but if needed use neem.

Common Name

Pepper fruit fly; it is also known as the tomato fruit fly.

Scientific Name

Atherigona orientalis

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Information from CAB International (2017) *Atherigona orientalis* (pepper fruit fly) (2017) Crop Protection Compendium. (<http://www.cabi.org/cpc>); and from Hibbard KL *et al.* (2012) Pepper Fruit Fly *Atherigona orientalis* (Schiner) (Insecta: Diptera: Muscidae). Entomology and Nematology Department, Featured Creatures. UF/IFAS University of Florida. (<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/IN/IN94800.pdf>). Photos 1-4 MAF Plant Health & Environment Laboratory (2011) Pepper Fruit Fly (*Atherigona orientalis*). PaDIL - <http://www.padi.gov.au>.

This mini fact sheet is a part of the app *Pacific Pests and Pathogens*

The mobile application is available from the Google Play Store and Apple iTunes.

