



## Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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### Amaranthus stem weevil (351)



Photo 1. Larva of *Hypolixus* species, inside hollowed out centre of *Amaranthus* stem. Note the amount of frass present.



Photo 2. Larvae and frass, *Hypolixus* species, inside hollowed out centre of *Amaranthus* stem.



Photo 3. Larva, *Hypolixus* species, inside *Amaranthus* stem.



Photo 4. Larva, *Hypolixus* species, inside *Amaranthus* stem.



Photo 5. *Amaranthus* stem weevil, *Hypolixus* species.

### Summary

- Restricted distribution. Asia, Africa, Central America, Oceania. In Fiji. A weevil on *Amaranthus* species, both vegetables and weeds. Commonly called 'pigweeds'.
- Important pest. Damage by grubs (larvae) boring stems and branches. They spread *Fusarium* species causing decay and cankers. Pupate inside stem at base. Adults feed on leaves. Larvae spread in stems and adults on the wing.
- Natural enemies: Not reported; note, used as biocontrol of *Amaranthus spinosus* - major weed in Thailand.
- Cultural control: weed - especially wild amaranths; avoid adjacent overlapping crops; monitor frequently and pull out and burn wilted plants; collect and burn crop remains at harvest.
- Chemical control: PDPs (botanicals), e.g., neem, pyrethrum and derris; or synthetic products, e.g., malathion and pyrethroids. Note, effectiveness in doubt as larvae concealed within stems and branches.

## Common Name

Amaranthus stem weevil, Amaranthus weevil, pigweed weevil.

## Scientific Name

*Hypolixus* species. The species recorded by CABI<sup>1</sup> are *Hypolixus ritsemae*, *Hypolixus truncatus*, and *Hypolixus nublilosus*. *Hypolixus haerens* is reported as the most common pigweed weevil in Kenya.

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<sup>1</sup>CABI *Amaranthus spinosus* (spiny amaranth) (2017) Crop Protection Compendium. ([www.cabi.org/cpc](http://www.cabi.org/cpc)). Information from Tara JS (2009) Bionomics of *Hypolixus truncatus* (f.) (Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Lixinae: Lixini), a major pest of *Amaranthus caudatus* L. Mun. Ent. Zool. Vol. 4(2); and Chittora A (2015) Insect pests of amaranthus and moringa. (<https://www.slideshare.net/AkshayChittora/insect-pests-of-amaranthus-and-moringa-53613459>); and Rajeshkanna *et al.* (2017) Biology and management of Amaranthus stem borer (*Hypolixus truncatus*) Coleoptera: Curculionidae. Annals of Sri Lanka Department of Agriculture 19: 258-266; and from Blodgett J., Swart WJ, Louw SvM (2004) Identification of fungi and fungal pathogens associated with *Hypolixus haerens* and decayed and cankered stems of *Amaranthus hybridus*. Plant Disease 88:333-337. Photos 1-5 Mani Mua, SPC, Sigatoka Research Station, Fiji.

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