



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Tobacco flea beetle (355)



Photo 1. Adult tobacco flea beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*.
Note, the long antennae.



Photo 2. Adult tobacco flea beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*.
Side view.



Photo 3. Tobacco flea beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*,
feeding on tomato



Photo 4. Adult tobacco flea beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*,
and holes eaten in a tomato leaf.



Photo 5. Severe damage on eggplant by the tobacco flea
beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*.



Photo 6. Severe damage on eggplant by the tobacco
flea beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*.



Photo 7. Large swarm of tobacco flea beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*, on eggplant.



Photo 8. Irregular patches on leaf of tobacco where surface layers have been chewed by the tobacco flea beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*.



Photo 9. Symptoms of tobacco flea beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*, on capsicum.



Photo 10. Symptoms of tobacco flea beetle, *Epitrix hirtipennis*, on potato.

Summary

- Restricted distribution. Americas, Caribbean, Europe, Oceania. Present in Guam and Fiji.
- On eggplant and tomato, primarily, but also other members of nightshade family, including weeds.
- Damage by larvae and adults chewing small, irregular holes in leaves giving a 'shot-hole' effect. Damage worse on seedlings, especially during droughts.
- Eggs laid at base of stems; larvae feed on roots. Adults brown with black markings, long antennae, and well developed hind legs for jumping. Spread on the wing. Survival on weeds and remains of plants in the field.
- Cultural control: monitor twice weekly; weed - especially those in nightshade family; do not plant new crops next to old; mulch; use protective covers; crop rotation (maize, brassicas, legumes); collect trash and burn after harvest.
- Chemical control: use biorational pesticides i) PDPs - derris, chilli, pyrethrum, ii) biopesticides - spinosad or abamectin, or iii) synthetic pyrethroids or neonicotinoids, remembering they will kill natural enemies.

Common Name

Tobacco flea beetle

Scientific Name

Epitrix hirtipennis

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Information from Peppers. Flea beetles. UC IPM. (<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/r604300611.html>); and Cuthbertson AGS(2015) Chemical and ecological control methods for Epitrix spp. Global J. Environ, Sci, Manage 1(1): 95-97 (http://www.gjesm.net/pdf_9553_82f0576dbd1b7d6b6eb59ee9b003d41.html); and from Flea beetles. Colorado State University Extension. (<http://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/insects/flea-beetles-5-592/>). Photo 1&2 Natasha Wright, Cook's Pest Control, Bugwood.org. Photos 3-6 Mani Mui, SPC, Sigatoka Research Station, Fiji. Photo 8 R.J. Reynolds, Tobacco Company Slide Set, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, Bugwood2.org

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

