

Citrus fruit piercing moth (113)

Summary

- Widespread distribution. Not in Americas. On a wide range of cultivated and wild fruits, including banana, citrus, 5-corner fruit, guava, mango, passionfruit, pineapple and, in outbreak years, capsicum, melon and tomato. An important pest.
- Adult moths do the damage, causing serious outbreaks on citrus (>70%), tomatoes, capsicum, 5-corner fruit. Adults have a 25 mm long, barbed feeding tube to pierce the fruit and suck out the juices. Rots develop from the holes.
- Eggs laid on *Erythrina* trees, where larvae feed. Note, a gall wasp has decimated trees in some countries, and moth populations have declined.
- Natural enemies: not always sufficient to stop outbreaks.
- Cultural controls: early harvests; fruit bagging, nets.
- Chemical control: not practical; moths have minimal contact with fruit, and sprays near harvest may leave residues. Not feasible to cut down *Erythrina* trees.

Common Name

Fruit-piercing moth

Scientific Name

Eudocima fullonia; previously *Othreis fullonia*

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Information from Waterhouse DF, Norris KR (1987) *Biological Control Pacific Prospects*. Inkata Press. Assistance; and from Wilco Liebrechts (pers. comm), Eco-Consult Pacific, Fiji. Photo 1 Gerald McCormack, Cook Islands Biodiversity & Natural Heritage. (<http://cookislands.bishopmuseum.org/>).

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Photo 1. Adult fruit-piercing moth, *Eudocima fullonia*. Note the red hind wings with the distinctive comma markings and black borders.



Photo 2. Fruit drop on orange caused by fruit piercing moth, *Eudocima fullonia* (Queensland). There is no fruit left on the tree!



Photo 3. Close-up of fallen citrus fruit from tree illustrated in Photo 2. Note, the small circular rots that quickly spread across the fruit; these are due to secondary invasions of fungi and bacteria after the fruit-piercing moth, *Eudocima fullonia*, has made an entry point.

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