

Bean pod sucking bug (018)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. On many kinds of beans. An important pest.
- Eggs are laid singly on leaves; the ant-like nymphs hatch, moulting to 16-18 mm long dark brown adults.
- Nymphs and adults use long, needle-like, mouth parts to suck juices from seeds causing pods to turn brown, shrivel and die.
- Cultural control: do not plant next to older crops where bugs are present; plant *Bixa* nearby as a trap crop; handpick in early mornings; collect and burn remains of the crop after harvest.
- Chemical control: sprays PDPs: derris, pyrethrum or chilli; synthetic pyrethroids or malathion.

Common Name

Pod sucking bug

Scientific Name

Riptortus species; there are two species, *Riptortus serripes* and *Riptortus linearis*.



Photo 1. *Riptortus* nymphs. Note that the nymphs are ant mimics - they have evolved to appear as ants - presumably this makes potential predators cautious about attacking them.



Photo 2. *Riptortus* adults and nymphs.



Photo 4. *Riptortus* adult feeding on the seeds of long bean.



Photo 3. Adult *Riptortus* pod-sucking bug.



Photo 5. Bean pods shrivel and die when attacked by *Riptortus*, and losses can be high.



Photo 6. Fruit of *Bixa*, the lipstick tree. Observations on Malaita, Solomon Islands, suggest that *Riptortus* is attracted to the seeds of this shrub. If proven, it could be used as a companion plant.

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