

## Beet webworm (345)

### Summary

- Worldwide. Defoliation by caterpillars important on beet, amaranth, and legumes - if attack coincides with pod-filling.
- Larvae feed from underside of leaves, making 'windows'; later, feed from within rolled leaves. Up to 25 mm, greyish-green (reddish-pink at maturity), with dark line along back. Adult with white bands on wings.
- Spreads on the wing: famous for long-distance migrations; spread in plant trade.
- Natural enemies: larval parasitoids.
- Cultural control: weed; plant far from infested crops; in small plots, remove leaves with caterpillars, or squash by hand; collect debris and destroy after harvest.
- Chemical control: PDPs (neem, derris, pyrethrum, or chilli, with soap to get them into rolled leaves); use spinosad or Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*). Avoid, synthetic pyrethroids: they will kill natural enemies.

### Common Name

Beet webworm, Hawaiian beet webworm

### Scientific Name

*Spolodea recurvalis*; previously known as *Hymenia recurvalis*. It is a member of Crambidae.

AUTHOR Grahame Jackson

<sup>1</sup>Information from Swaine G (1971) *Agricultural Zoology in Fiji*. Her Majesty's Stationery Office. London; and CABI (2017) *Spolodea recurvalis* (Hawaiian beet webworm) Crop Protection Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/cpc/datasheet/28245>); and Beet webworm - *Spolodea recurvalis*. ([https://www.brisbaneinsects.com/brisbane\\_pyralidmoths/BeetWebworm.htm](https://www.brisbaneinsects.com/brisbane_pyralidmoths/BeetWebworm.htm)); and from McCaffrey S, Harding C (2009) (*Spolodea recurvalis*): PaDIL - (<http://www.padil.gov.au>). Photo 1 Alton N. Sparks, Jr., University of Georgia, Bugwood.org. Photo 2 Mark Dreiling, Bugwood.org. Photo 3 McCormack, Gerald (2007) Cook Islands Biodiversity Database, Version 2007.2. Cook Islands Natural Heritage Trust, Rarotonga. Online at: (<http://cookislands.bishopmuseum.org>).

Produced with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research under project PC/2010/090: *Strengthening integrated crop management research in the Pacific Islands in support of sustainable intensification of high-value crop production*, implemented by the University of Queensland and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.



Photo 1. Larva of beet webworm, *Spolodea recurvalis*.



Photo 2. Adult beetle webworm, *Spolodea recurvalis*, showing white bands on wings and abdomen.



Photo 3. As in Photo 2, adult beetle webworm, *Spolodea recurvalis*, showing white bands on wings and abdomen

Copyright © 2022. All rights reserved.



Australian Government  
Australian Centre for  
International Agricultural Research



Web edition hosted at <https://apps.lucidcentral.org/pppw>