

## Bele (Abelmoschus) flea beetle (022)

### Summary

- Narrow distribution. Common in Papua New Guinea. It spread to Solomon Islands in the 1980s. On *bele* (*aibeka*, slippery cabbage). An important pest.
- Eggs laid in soil near the stem; larvae feed on small roots, then pupate; adults (4 mm long) feed on leaves.
- Leaves are ruined as a food by the presence of the many holes.
- Cultural control: plant far from infested crops; plant in clover, under shade, or in the wet season; handpick; cultivate around stem to expose eggs; use thick grass mulches; put horticultural glue bands (e.g., Tanglefoot) around stems.
- Chemical control: spray with wood ash (ash + lime in water); alternatively, PDPs: neem, derris and pyrethrum, or spinosad; or synthetic pyrethroids, but likely to kill natural enemies.

### Common Name

There is no common name, but *bele* flea beetle, Abelmoschus flea beetle, *aibika* flea beetle *sliperi kabis* flea beetle would all be suitable.

### Scientific Name

*Nisotra basselae*

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Photo 1. Extensive damage on leaves of *bele* by *Nisotra basselae*, such that growers in many parts of Solomon Islands have abandoned its cultivation.



Photo 2. Adult *Nisotra basselae* on *bele*.

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Diagram. Life cycle of *Nisotra basselae*.



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