

Pumpkin beetle (040)

Summary

- Uncertain distribution. Asia, Oceania. On cucurbits. Common on cucumber, melon, pumpkin, watermelon and gourds. Similar species are pests of these plants elsewhere in Southeast Asia and Oceania..
- Eggs are laid in the soil, and larvae feed on the roots.
- Adults do the damage, cutting circles from the leaves; often several beetles feed on the same leaf.
- Cultural control: avoid planting new crops next to old; ensure adequate nutrition and water so plants outgrow beetle damage; catch beetles in early morning or evening; at harvest, collect trash and destroy after harvest; leave 1-2 months before replanting.
- 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

Pumpkin beetle, red pumpkin beetle

Scientific Name

Aulacophora species. The identification of the species in the Pacific is uncertain. *Aulacophora similis* has been recorded from Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Tonga. But it is more likely that the species in these countries is *Aulacophora abdominalis*.



Photo 1. Red pumpkin beetle, *Aulacophora* sp.



Photo 2. Red pumpkin beetle, *Aulacophora* sp., eating circles on a leaf.



Photo 3. Red pumpkin beetle, *Aulacophora* sp., showing the groove on the thorax. Compare with *Monolepta*.



Photo 4. Red pumpkin beetles, *Aulacophora* sp., cutting leaf circles from watermelon.



Photo 5. Discs cut from a cucumber leaf by the pumpkin beetle, *Aulacophora* sp.



Photo 6. Several red pumpkin beetles, *Aulacophora* sp., feeding together on the same leaf.

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