

Sorghum midge (336)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. Sorghum (grain and forage), and wild grasses (especially Johnson grass). A major fly pest.
- Larvae eat the young seed heads.
- Midge, mosquito-like, orange, up to 2 mm long, clear wings, long antennae, and, for females, a long thin ovipositor. Eggs laid into flowers.
- Eggs hatch, larvae are white then orange, 2.5 mm long, spindle shaped. Pupae on the flower head. Some larvae go into resting phase, up to 5 years.
- Spread occurs when grain is moved with larvae in resting phase.
- Natural enemies: several parasitoid wasps, but only partially effective.
- Cultural control: plant early; weed grasses; increase seeding rate; rotate with sugar cane or peanuts; legume intercrops; burn stubble; resistant varieties.
- Chemical control: if >1-2 midges/head at flowering apply synthetic pyrethroids.



Photo 1. Adult sorghum midge, *Stenodiplosis sorghicola*.

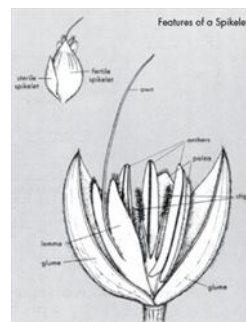


Diagram. Structure of a single sorghum spikelet.

Common Name

Sorghum midge

Scientific Name

Stenodiplosis sorghicola; previously, *Contarinia sorghicola*.

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¹Information from Swaine G (1971) *Agricultural Zoology in Fiji*. Her Majesty's Stationery Office. London; and CABI (2015) *Stenodiplosis sorghicola* (sorghum midge) Crop Protection Compendium (<https://www.cabi.org/cpc/datasheet/15237>); and from Business Queensland (2020) Sorghum midge. Queensland Government. (<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/crop-growing/pests-field-crops/sorghum-midge>); and from DAF (2018) Insect pests management in sorghum. Queensland Government. (https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/agriculture/plants/crops-pastures/broadacre-field-crops/insect-pest-management-specific-crops/insect-pest-management-sorghum#Sorghum_midge); Diagram Mississippi State University Extension. (<http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/information-sheets/sorghum-midge-control>). Photo 1 Alton N. Sparks, Jr., University of Georgia. Bugwood.org.

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