

Sugarcane pink borer (278)

Summary

- Narrow distribution. Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. On sugarcane and relatives, and grasses. A major pest.
- Eggs laid on young cane. Larvae bore together into the stalk killing the shoot, then migrate, boring into other stems.
- Damage attracts weevil borer (**see Fact Sheet no. 241**). Stems break in winds.
- Spread by flight and in cane.
- Natural enemies: wasp parasitoids.
- Cultural control: plant March-May; borer-free setts; resistant varieties; avoid excessive N; rogue plants with dead shoots; avoid burning, leave as mulch.
- Chemical control: synthetic pyrethroids, based on pheromone monitoring; also used to treat setts.

Common Name

Pink sugarcane borer, Ramu shoot borer, sugarcane borer

Scientific Name

Sesamia griseascens. It is a member of the Noctuidae.



Photo 1. Damage to sugarcane by the pink sugarcane borer, *Sesamia griseascens*, boring into the stem.



Photo 2. Adult pink sugarcane borer, *Sesamia griseascens*.

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Information from Sra (2015) Information sheet ISI5001. Sugarcane Research Australia. (https://sugarresearch.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Exotic_Borers_ISI5001.pdf); and from Young GR, Kuniata LS (1992) A major pest of sugarcane endemic to Papua New Guinea: A constant threat to the Australian sugar industry. (<http://sesamiagriseascens.weebly.com/morphology.html>); and CABI (2012) *Sesamia griseascens* (Pink sugarcane borer). Crop Protection Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/cpc/datasheet/49750>). Photo 1 Korowi KT, Samson PR (2013) Screening for borer resistance among sugarcane clones in Papua New Guinea, 2010-2012. Proc Aust Soc Sugar Cane Technol vol 35, pp 9. Photo 2 Walker K (2011) Ramu shoot borer (*Sesamia griseascens*). PaDIL - (<http://www.padil.gov.au>).

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