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Agronomy Report

JUNE 2020



Tools for Insect Monitoring

As I have spent much of the last week checking canola crops for flea beetle damage, I am once more reminded of all the great tools we have available in Alberta to help us monitor the insect pests that we have to deal with every year. Thanks to the internet and the work of some excellent entomologists across the prairies, we have a wealth of timely information at

our fingertips that helps us understand what to scout for, how to scout for it, when to scout for it, where to look, and even how to interpret the risk level of what you find in the field. So I thought the best use of this month's newsletter as we get into the heart of the insect season is to share with everybody some of the helpful links and sites that I frequent during the summer. You may already be using some or all of these sites and/or people as a resource, but if you aren't you are missing out on some great resources.



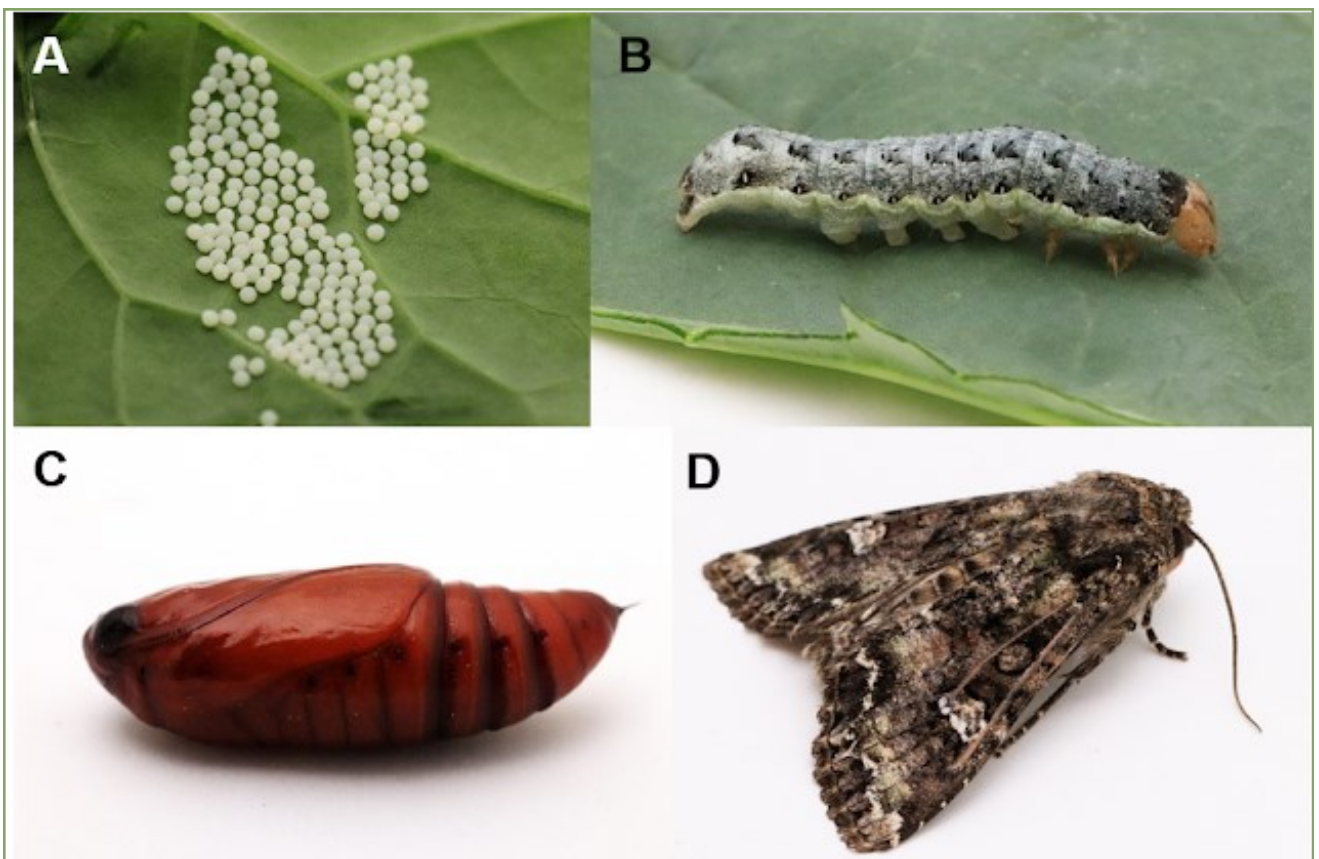
The resources that Wayne shares in this publication are worth noting

- <http://prairiepestmonitoring.blogspot.com/>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-insect-pest-monitoring-network.aspx>
- <https://fieldheroes.ca/>

Resource Number One

<http://prairiepestmonitoring.blogspot.com/>

First and foremost on my list of go to insect resources are the fine people at the Prairie Pest Monitoring Network who can be found at <http://prairiepestmonitoring.blogspot.com/>. The PPMN has been around since 1997 and according to their website they are “comprised of field crop entomologists who conduct research and actively monitor to support crop protection on the Canadian prairies. It includes researchers from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Manitoba Agriculture, Saskatchewan Agriculture, Alberta Agriculture & Forestry as well as University researchers.” They produce a weekly report that models environmental information and forecasts for many different crop pests. You can get their weekly updates straight to your in-box by following the link above and submitting your email to them. But take the time to visit the website – they are a great resource on everything from detailed information on the life cycle of insect pests to risk maps for them. They also provide information on beneficial insects; how to identify them and how they can work for you if you let them.



Stages of bertha armyworm from egg (A), larva (B), pupa © to adult (D).
Photos: J. Williams (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada)

Resource Number Two

Another excellent site is the Alberta Insect Pest Monitoring Network which can be found at <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-insect-pest-monitoring-network.aspx> which provides live feed maps on several pests throughout the growing season, including Bertha armyworm, Cabbage seedpod weevil, Cutworm, Diamondback Moth and Wheat Midge. The site also includes a reporting tool for cutworm and cabbage seedpod weevil so growers can add their own fields directly to the database. In addition there are some great videos that show you proper scouting techniques for the various pests and how to build traps for some of the more common insects they monitor.

(Photos from the Alberta Insect Pest Monitoring Network)



<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-insect-pest-monitoring-network.aspx>

Resource Number Three

A third site I would recommend a site called Field Heroes at <https://fieldheroes.ca/>. This site is funded by the Western Grains Research Foundation and their goal “is to increase the likelihood of beneficial insects being considered in production decisions and create a platform for entomologists to share their knowledge with growers and agronomists.” The site focuses on the identification of beneficial insects and how they help control the various pest species in a field. But it also features tips on scouting, like how to properly use a sweep net, and includes a few pest scouting guides that are very helpful.

<https://fieldheroes.ca/>

Sweep Net Video Series

Discover why to sweep a field, how to sweep effectively and what to do with the contents of your net in this three-part video series

In closing...

Finally, I would say that one of the best things you can do is look up the people that are associated with these various websites on twitter and start to follow them.

I started a twitter account about 5 or 6 years ago for this express purpose; so I could have direct access to these world class entomologists.

Whenever I have been stumped by something I see in the field, I have found that posting a picture on twitter and appealing for help is an excellent way to get answers in a hurry. The entomologists that work in western Canada are passionate about their work and eager to share their knowledge, so don't be afraid to contact them, you won't be disappointed!



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