

Issue 10 – July 24, 2025

Manitoba Crop Pest Update



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Summary

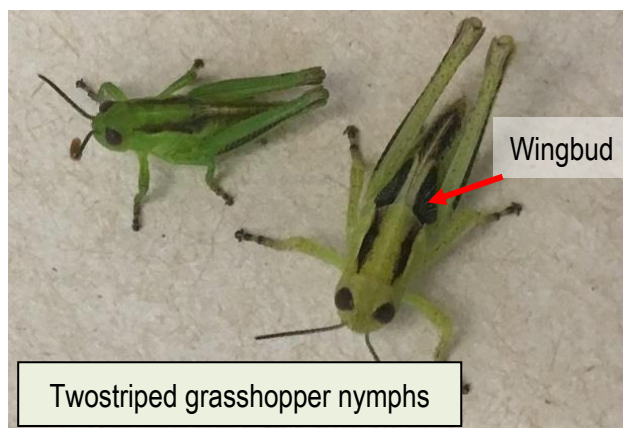
Insects: Grasshopper levels have resulted in some control in the Northwest region, mainly on cereals, and in the Interlake region, on cereals, alfalfa, forage grasses and pastures. There are reports of **true armyworm** in several fields in the Interlake, including fescue, timothy, spring cereals and hay fields, requiring some insecticide treatment. True armyworms were also noted in spring wheat in the Eastern region, but below threshold levels. **Diamondback moth** larvae are being noticed in some canola fields, but so far just at below threshold levels.

Weeds: Weed escapes are becoming more noticeable now. Wild oats, lamb's quarters and wild buckwheat are showing up in many crops.

Entomology

Grasshoppers

There is currently a mix of grasshopper stages present, nymphs and adults. Twostriped grasshopper continues to be a dominant species, at least in the Central region, however, migratory grasshopper is also noticeable in some areas. Twostriped grasshopper is the largest of the pest species of grasshoppers and can have different colour morphs as both nymphs and adults.



Note the wingbuds on the older nymph in the photo. They still can't fly; it isn't until grasshoppers become adults and have fully developed wings that they can fly, enabling them to move greater distances.

Report compiled by John Gavloski, Entomologist and
Kim Brown, Weeds Specialist, Manitoba Agriculture
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Corn Rootworm – Monitoring Adults in Higher Risk Fields

Northern and western corn rootworm are beetles whose larvae feed on corn roots, and only corn roots. In fields where corn is rotated with other crops, they should not be present. The problem comes when corn is not rotated and planted in the same field for multiple years in a row. Such fields are at higher risk of corn rootworm becoming an economical problem. If root feeding is severe enough, plants lodge, continue to grow, and end up with curved stems. This can make harvest difficult if it is common.

Yellow sticky cards can be put in the field to monitor what the levels of northern and western corn rootworm adults are like and determine if measures to address corn rootworm should be taken. The protocol is simple: set up a transect of 4 traps in a field of interest, count the number of western and northern corn rootworms (separately) on each sticky trap once per week, and repeat this process for 4 weeks. Results from the trapping are compiled by a multi province/state network of entomologists and agronomists working on corn rootworm called the Corn Rootworm Monitoring Network.



Anyone with or scouting fields for corn with a long history of being in corn can contact John Gavloski at the Email address or phone number at the bottom of this report, and I can provide traps, instructions, or get traps placed if in the vicinity of Carman. We ask volunteers to give us some background information on the field and either report their data in an online system called Survey123, or submit it to John Gavloski and I can get the data entered.



Northern corn rootworm



Western corn rootworm

Weeds

Weed Escapes

Monitor weedy patches and try to determine what happened and why the weeds are showing up now. Can you eliminate anything mechanical like spray misses or plugged nozzles? Did the weeds emerge after herbicides were applied or were they too big and past optimum staging when they were sprayed? If herbicide resistance is suspected do not let those weeds go to seed and add to the seedbank in the soil.

Waterhemp

Watch for suspicious pigweeds that have escaped control. Contact Kim Brown if you have plants that you suspect are waterhemp. I can get them tested to determine the Amaranth species and whether or not it's resistant to Herbicide groups 2,5,9 and 14.

Forecast

Bertha Armyworm

The population of adult moths of bertha armyworms are being monitored during the flight and egg-laying period in June and July using pheromone-baited traps. Bertha armyworms have been found in 85 out of 86 traps that counts were reported from so far. Cumulative counts remained in the low risk category in most traps, however traps near Makaroff (Northwest), Kenton (Southwest), Carman (Central), and Lundar and Pleasant Home (Interlake) have increased into the uncertain risk category.

The highest cumulative trap count so far is 506 from a trap near Makaroff in the Northwest region.



Table 2. Highest cumulative counts of bertha armyworm (*Mamestra configurata*) in pheromone-baited traps for five agricultural regions as of July 24, 2025.

Region	Nearest Town	Trap Count
Northwest	Makaroff	506
	Durban	232
	Dropmore	227
	The Pas	142
	Bield	130
Southwest	Kenton	341
	Whitehead	232
	Metigoshe	195
	Rapid City	162
	Lyleton	159
Central	Carman	367
	St. Claude	192
	Emerson	167
	Baldur	105
	Brunkild	102
Eastern	Ste. Anne	20
	Tourond	16
Interlake	Lundar	309
	Pleasant Home	303
	Broad Valley	194
	Warren	133
	Fisher Branch, Vidor	106

← Highest cumulative count

0-300 = low risk
 300-900 = uncertain risk
 900-1,200 = moderate risk
 1,200+ = high risk

Highest counts in each region of Manitoba and a monitoring summary are updated weekly on the Insect Page of the Manitoba Agriculture website at: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/bertha-armyworm-monitoring.pdf>

Information on the biology of bertha armyworm and monitoring larval levels can be found at: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/bertha-armyworm-factsheet.pdf>

True armyworms

Larvae of armyworms (*Mythimna unipuncta*), sometimes also called true armyworms, can cause significant feeding injury to cereals and forage grasses when levels are abundant. Adult moths of armyworms migrate to Manitoba in the spring from overwintering sites from the southern US. A network of pheromone-baited traps are being monitored from early-May until late-July to determine how early and in what levels populations of armyworms have arrive.



Armyworm moths have been caught in all 32 traps. The highest cumulative counts so far have been in the Interlake region, where there are three traps with cumulative counts above 200. All three traps in the Eastern region have cumulative counts ranging from 88 – 212. In the Southwest region, there are three traps with cumulative counts above 40.

Table 3. Highest cumulative counts of armyworms in pheromone-baited traps for agricultural regions in Manitoba as of July 23, 2025.

Region	Nearest Town	Trap Count
Southwest	Brandon	53
	Pierson	49
	Lyleton	44
	Isabella	21
	Birtle	12
Central	Arnaud	37
	Ermerson	3
Eastern	Kleefeld	212
	New Bothwell	163
	Greenland	88
Interlake	Riverton	345
	Washow Bay	253
	Famnes	226
	Zbaraz	86
	Fisher Branch	63

← Highest cumulative count

Those scouting cereals and forage grasses may want to check to see what armyworm larval levels are like in their fields. Armyworm larvae have been noticed in some fields, and some fields of small grain cereals and forage grasses in the Interlake and Central regions have been sprayed for armyworms.

A map showing armyworm counts from Manitoba, Eastern Canada, and several Northeast U.S. states is available at:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/7164d23d488246d198dcf7a07d8c9021/page/Home/?views=Welcome>.

Go to the link "TAW". The "Play" button at the bottom can be set so the map automatically advances (click middle arrow), or set to "Stop" and the arrows at either side of the button used to go forward or backward a week at a time.

Identification Quiz

What is this caterpillar that was found on a birdsfoot trefoil plant?

Answer: This is the caterpillar of the pepper-and-salt moth (*Biston betularia*), sometimes also called the peppered moth. The caterpillars mimic not only the form, but also the colour of twigs. Research shows that the caterpillars can sense the twig's colour with their skin and match their body colour to it to protect themselves from predators.

The adult moths are frequently used as an example to teach natural selection. During the 1700s in the UK, the moths typically had white wings with some dark speckles "peppered" across them. This pattern provided good camouflage against the lichen-covered trees. At the same time there was a rarer form of the moth first recorded in Manchester in 1848 that had dark coloured wings which made it more obvious to predators when on the light-coloured trees. As the Industrial revolution took off, pollution from the smoke and soot killed off lichens and darkened tree trunks. This change in environment made the light-coloured moths more obvious to predators while the dark form, now equipped with better camouflage, became less obvious. By 1900, pepper-and-salt moth populations around English cities were as much as 98% dark moths due to them being less likely to be eaten by predators. After smoke control was introduced in the mid-1970s, the frequency of the dark moths began to decline, once again driven by the unequal predation on the two forms.



To **report observations** on insects, plant pathogens, or weeds that may be of interest or importance to farmers and agronomists in Manitoba, please send messages to one of the following Manitoba Agriculture Pest Management Specialists.

John Gavloski, Entomologist (204) 750-0594

Kim Brown, Weed Specialist (431) 344-0239