

Issue 14 – August 20, 2026

Manitoba Crop Pest Update



[Seasonal Reports](#)

[Weekly Weather Maps](#)

[Insects](#)

Summary

Insects: **Lygus bugs** have surpassed threshold levels, and there has been spraying to control them, in some canola fields in both the Interlake and Eastern regions. Some spraying of soybeans for **soybean aphids** has occurred in the Interlake and Eastern regions, and increasing levels were noticed in some fields in the Southwest region. Some are reporting increasing presence of predators of soybean aphids, and soybeans in some areas are starting to advance out of the susceptible stages. **European corn borer** is quite noticeable in some millet fields in the Central region, and a couple of millet fields have been sprayed to control corn borers. There have currently been no reports of economic populations of corn borers in corn. **Grasshoppers** were controlled in a couple of soybean fields in the Central region, although in some areas grasshopper populations are light.

Diseases: No major disease concerns this week. **Sclerotinia** and **Verticillium stripe** are commonly seen in some canola fields. **White mold (Sclerotinia)** has been observed in some soybean fields. **Sooty mold** is also present in some wheat and canola fields.

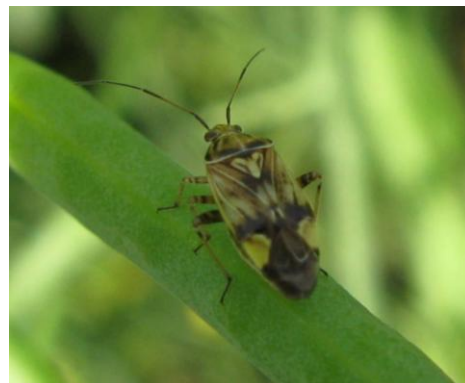
Weeds: Weed escapes are noticeable now, and producers may be wanting to take down big weeds before they set seed. There is no silver bullet for this, because most annual weeds have viable seed already. Look at harvest management options to deal with green weeds and consider mowing weed patches. Waterhemp is just starting to set seed now so it's crucial to destroy them before they add hundreds of thousands of seed per plant to the seedbank. For weeds like waterhemp it's going to cost a lot more to let them live and set seed compared to the dollars lost from mowing some crop.

Entomology

Lygus bugs in canola – threshold and susceptible crop stages

Some of the later seeded canola fields may be at growth stages that are still attractive and susceptible to Lygus bugs. Many earlier seeded fields would likely now be too mature for Lygus to be an economical concern.

Assessing Lygus levels requires using a sweep net. When canola is still flowering, sweeping for Lygus and other insects is easy to do. Once canola starts producing pods, walking through the canola and taking sweeps becomes progressively more difficult as pod development progresses, and eventually can become impossible to do in vigorously growing fields at more advanced pod stages.



Report compiled by John Gavloski, Entomologist; Simon Huang, Field Crop Pathologist; Kim Brown, Weeds Specialist, Manitoba Agriculture. [Subscribe](#) to the weekly Crop Pest Update

The ideal time to be doing sweep net sampling for Lygus bugs is the late flowering stages (when lower pods are starting to fill) until the early ripening stages (when seeds in the lower pods are still translucent or green). Once there are brown seeds in lower pods, Lygus bugs can do less damage to the canola crop, and it may be impossible to sweep for Lygus bugs in some fields.

Susceptible Stages: Canola is most susceptible to lygus injury during the early pod stages. Canola can compensate for bud and flower loss, resulting in no or minimal net reduction in the number of pods. However, Lygus bug feeding on pods can result in collapsed seeds, which can reduce yield. Research in Alberta found that low levels of Lygus bug feeding from bud to early flower stage induced greater branching and thicker stems compared to plants without Lygus bugs, and may increase seed yield. But high levels feeding on young seeds can result in economic yield loss. If the seeds in the lower pods are still soft, the crop is still susceptible to Lygus bugs, and it is good to check levels, although this does get tougher to do as the canola is producing pods.

Economic Threshold: A threshold of 20-30 Lygus bugs per 10 sweeps is suitable for good growing conditions. Using the lower end of the threshold (about 20 per 10 sweeps) may be appropriate for stressed canola with less ability to compensate for feeding. The most vulnerable crop stage for Lygus feeding is after flowering and when seeds are enlarging on lower pods. When most lower pods become leathery and when seeds inside are firm, Lygus bugs can no longer penetrate the pods or seeds with their mouthparts and are no longer an economic threat.

Thursday, August 20, is World Mosquito Day

Happy world mosquito day everyone! To celebrate World Mosquito Day, here are a few fun facts on mosquitoes:

- We have 45 species of mosquitoes in Manitoba; there are 80 species in Canada, and over 3,700 species of mosquitoes worldwide.
- Male mosquitoes exclusively feed on plant derived sugars like nectar, and this is where females get the bulk of their nutrition as well. Female mosquitoes will only bite humans or animals when they are in need of protein to produce their eggs, which they get from blood.
- The mosquito family Culicidae likely emerged during the Jurassic period (201 to 145 million years ago). The second oldest adult mosquito fossil was found in Alberta, preserved in 76.5 million year old amber.
- Mosquitoes beat their wings between 250 and 500 times per second, and for some species even faster than this. Females have slower wing speeds which give off a lower pitch that attracts males for mating.

Stages of Mosquitoes



Larvae



Pupa



Adults

Larvae and pupae only occur in water – hence standing water is a great breeding place for mosquitoes.

On John's hand – taking one for science.

Diseases

Sclerotinia (white mold) in canola and soybean

Sclerotinia has been reported to be prevalent in some canola and soybean fields. Fungicide application is going to be justifiable in very specific situations and specific areas of the province.



Sclerotinia symptoms and signs showing in canola fields. Photo Courtesy: Simon Huang, Manitoba Agriculture.

Special Sample Request: We are currently looking for the fungal resting bodies “**sclerotia**” from canola and soybean fields for a fungicide insensitivity study at AAFC. A sclerotium (plural: sclerotia) as shown in the photo on the right, is a compact, hardened black mass of fungal mycelium that contains food reserves, often found inside the stem. It acts as a survival structure, allowing fungi to endure harsh conditions like freezing cold or severe drought. If you see any of these sclerotia after cutting the stem, please collect them in a small paper bag or small envelope and coordinate with Simon (204-750-4248) for sample pickup or delivery. The results will get back to you without disclosing any individual information.



Sooty mold in wheat and canola

Sooty mold is usually superficial, and thought to have minor impact on the grains. More information can also be found in a recent update:

<https://prairiecropdisease.com/2026/08/19/recent-weather-conditions-and-crop-maturity-have-led-to-widespread-reports-of-sooty-molds-in-cereals-and-canola-in-southern-alberta/>

Weeds

Waterhemp

Waterhemp is just starting to set seed. This plant is dioecious meaning there are separate male and female plants. Female plants have white, feathery structures while male plants have yellow anthers (just like we see in



wheat when staging for FHB application). Male plants release yellow pollen which is noticeable when it rubs off on your hands and clothing. Here are pictures of a female and male plant:

Remove all waterhemp plants so they don't go to seed and add to the seedbank. These plants are extremely aggressive weeds and are resistant to most of the chemistry we use. Do not let any plants go through a combine as that will spread seed throughout

the field and any field that combine is in.

Forecast

Grasshopper survey

A reminder for those participating in the grasshopper survey that counts are done during August, when the majority of grasshoppers are in the adult stage.

Agronomists and farmers who would also be interested in estimating grasshopper numbers in or around any of the fields they are in, and having this information included in the survey, are encouraged to see the survey protocol (at the link below) for more details of the survey and where to send data. Your counts would be welcomed.

Estimates of grasshopper levels can be collected during regular farm visits. "Estimates" of grasshopper populations is stressed as it is often not possible to accurately count grasshoppers along a field edge or ditch area as they will be moving around as you get near the area of the count. However, estimates of what is present gives us some idea of the relative numbers that are present in different areas.

Data from the survey, along with weather data during the egg laying period of the grasshoppers, will be used to produce a grasshopper forecast for 2027.

The protocol and data sheet for the grasshopper survey is at:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/grasshopper-survey-protocol.pdf>

Identification Quiz

Question: What is this bearded fly, which you can sometimes see in crop fields?



Photo by Griffin Carnelley,
Manitoba Agriculture

Answer: This is a species of robber fly. Robber flies make up a family of flies called Asilidae. There are 227 species of robber flies in Canada, and 48 species in Manitoba.

Both the adults and larvae of robber flies are predaceous. Larvae live in the soil where they feed on insect eggs, larvae such as wireworms and root maggots, and other soft-bodied soil-dwelling creatures. Adults are generalist predators and have been recorded feeding on a diverse range of insects including grasshoppers, leafhoppers, beetles, wasps, aphids, midges, and other flies.

Adult robber flies perch, generally in open sunny areas, to locate prey. Once located, the fly seizes its victim mid flight and injects them with saliva that immobilizes and liquifies the tissues. The fly then has access to a liquid meal which is generally consumed upon returning to its perch.

More information on robber flies and other beneficial insects can be found in the following factsheet on “Maximizing the value of beneficial insects on the farm: predators and parasitoids”:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/beneficial-insects-predators-and-parasitoids-revised-june2024.pdf>

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

Simon Huang, Field Crop Pathologist (204) 750-4248