

GRASSHOPPERS

by Eric Day and Alexandra Spring

DESCRIPTION: Many species. Adults and nymphs: Brown, gray, black, or yellow. Strong hind legs. Up to 2 inches long. Most grasshoppers are strong flyers.



Adult Grasshopper *Clemson University - USDA Cooperative Extension Slide Series, Bugwood.org*

COMMON HOST PLANT(S): Lettuce, potato, beans and corn.

DAMAGE: Feed on any available vegetation. When abundant, they may destroy complete plantings of such crops as lettuce and potato.

DISTRIBUTION: Throughout United States. They are especially troublesome in central and northwestern states.

LIFE CYCLE: Female grasshoppers lay eggs in sodded areas towards the end of summer. Nymphs emerge from these overwintering eggs

near the beginning of summer and begin feeding on young plants. As the grasshopper nymphs mature, they migrate to other areas and feed on a large variety of plants. Nymphs mature into adults in about 1 1/2 to 2 months. Adults continue feeding until killed by cold temperatures.

CULTURAL CONTROL: Avoid planting gardens next to hay fields and ditch banks with high grasshopper populations. Seedlings may be protected by covering them with netting or cheesecloth. Removal of debris and turning of the soil with help expose the eggs to predators and the weather.

ORGANIC/BIOLOGICAL CONTROL: Birds such as crows, catbirds, bluebirds, mockingbirds, and sparrows are natural predators of grasshoppers. Spiders may also eat them.

CHEMICAL CONTROL: Treat using a registered insecticide, following all label instructions, precautions, and preharvest intervals specific to the crop.