

Crusader bug

Mictis profana

Fact sheet

Rachelle Johnstone, WA DPIRD, 2024

Risk period

Table 1. The risk and monitoring periods for crusader bug activity.

Flowering			Fruit drop		Golf ball			Colour break	Maturation		
Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul

Description

The crusader bug (*Mictis profana*) is an insect commonly found in citrus, with a wide distribution within Australia, Indonesia and the Indo-Pacific. They are considered a minor pest of citrus and generally do not require management.

Eggs are brown, elongated and have a domed lid.

Immature crusader bug nymphs are dark brown–black and have no cross on their back. Later stages of nymphs have a pair of orange spots on their back (Figure 1).

Adults are 20–25 mm long and easily recognised by a yellow cross on its back.



Figure 1. Crusader bugs nymph (lower left), adult female (upper left) and male (right). Photo: Smith et al. (1997).

Life cycle

Eggs are laid in rows or clusters on leaves, twigs or fruit. There are 5 nymphal stages, and the complete life cycle takes about 8 weeks in summer. There are 3–4 generations per year.

IPDM for the citrus industry Project CT19011



Hort Innovation

CITRUS FUND



Queensland Government



Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development



BIOLOGICAL SERVICES



Damage

Adults and nymphs prefer to feed on new shoots, piercing plants with their sucking mouthparts. Feeding causes the area above to wilt and die (Figure 2). They are most active during spring to autumn, which is when young shoots should be monitored. All citrus varieties are susceptible. Damage is occasionally important in young trees. New growth from grafts, shoot training or trellising is susceptible.

Risk period: October to April (Table 1).



Figure 2. Crusader bug feeding causes dieback to new shoots.

Monitoring

Regular crop monitoring during the risk period should include inspecting randomly selected young shoots.

Management and control

Biological: many natural enemies control crusader bugs including birds, spiders, assassin bugs, praying mantises and parasitic wasps.

Chemical: control of crusader bug is rarely required. If numbers are high (e.g. on new graft growth), consult your pest control specialist. *There are currently no registered chemical options for controlling crusader bug in citrus.

*June 2024

More information

Smith D, Beattie GA and Broadley R. 1997. *Citrus pests and their natural enemies: integrated pest management in Australia*. Queensland Department of Primary Industries, <http://hdl.handle.net/10462/pdf/9446>

IPDM for the citrus industry Project CT19011

