



Soldier Fly

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***Hermetia illucens* Linnaeus**

Origin

The soldier fly was first seen in 1930 in the fields of the Hilo Sugar Co.; now it is found on all of the major Hawaiian islands.

Public health concern

The larvae has been implicated in causing intestinal myiasis in humans.

Hosts

Larvae feeds primarily on chicken manure and organic garbage.

Poultry concern

Larvae churn and liquefy chicken manure, making it difficult to clean from chicken houses and of less value as a fertilizer for crops.

Soldier fly larvae can displace house fly larvae breeding in chicken manure.

Description

Large, stocky, black fly about ½ inch long. Resembles a wasp with translucent spots on its abdomen. Smoky black wings are held horizontally over its back at rest.

Twitches when moving about.

Life cycle

Growth stages: egg, larva, pupa, adult.

From egg to adult takes 40–75 days.

Eggs are laid in batches on chicken manure.

Larvae and pupae are flattened, roughly textured, and sandy gray.

Control

Poultry operations need to keep manure dry.

When manure is removed, keep a residue of old, dry manure to help absorb fresh droppings and preserve fly predators.



Soldier fly adult (above), larvae (below)



Surface spray with an insecticide where flies are breeding. Consult your pesticide supplier for recommended products, and always follow label directions.

References

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