Parasitoids: Braconid Wasps

Hymenoptera: Braconidae

WHAT TO LOOK FOR
Braconid wasps insert their eggs into insect hosts. Small, maggot-like wasp larvae emerge from the eggs and eat the host. Often the larvae will spin silken cocoons on or near the host’s body.

HOSTS
- caterpillars and moth larvae
- beetles
- fly larvae
- various insect pupae and adults

APPEARANCE
- small to medium sized dark wasps (7-8mm)

VEGETABLE CROPS
Found on or near a wide variety including:
- tomatoes
- cabbage
- corn
- beets

Braconid wasp cocoons on a tomato hornworm

Natural Enemies of Vegetable Insect Pests in Hawaii
Braconid wasps are attracted to flowering plants, especially those with flat, small florets such as:

- parsley
- dill, fennel
- sunn hemp
- composite flowers: daisies, chamomile, marigolds

Mix these plants in between crops or in nearby gardens, hedges, or borders.

**PESTS ATTACKED**
- aphids
- tomato hornworm
- various fruit flies
- leafminers
- diamondback moth
- armyworms

**WHAT THEY CAN DO FOR YOU**

Braconid wasp ovipositing into a fruit fly on a guava fruit

**WHAT THEY ARE**

Parasitoids are beneficial insects that prey on vegetable pests. Their eggs or larvae are usually found in or on a single insect host. The immature parasitoid develops on or within the host, ultimately killing the pest when it emerges as an adult. Most parasitoids are wasps or flies.