



Parasitoids: Pteromalid Wasps

Hymenoptera:
Pteromalidae

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Pteromalid wasps are widespread parasitoids of many caterpillar pests. The female lays eggs within a host pupa, from which more than 100 wasps may emerge. Look for pest larvae that turn brown as pteromalid wasps develop inside.



Pteromalid wasp ovipositing into a cabbageworm pupa

HOSTS

- eggs, larvae and pupae of many crop pests
- caterpillars

KEY CHARACTER

- parasitized hosts are paralyzed by female wasps

APPEARANCE

- very small (2mm)
- black or metallic blue-green color

FRUIT & VEGETABLE CROPS

Many, including:

- rice paddies
- fruit trees
- field crops

Natural Enemies of Vegetable Insect Pests in Hawaii



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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.

Pteromalid wasps can be found near plants that attract their hosts, such as:

- sunn hemp
- fruit trees
- rice paddies
- **composite flowers:** sunflowers, daisies, chamomile



Rice paddies

WHAT THEY CAN DO FOR YOU



PESTS ATTACKED

- cabbageworm
- diamondback moth
- leafhopper and planthopper eggs
- mealy bugs
- caterpillar pests

