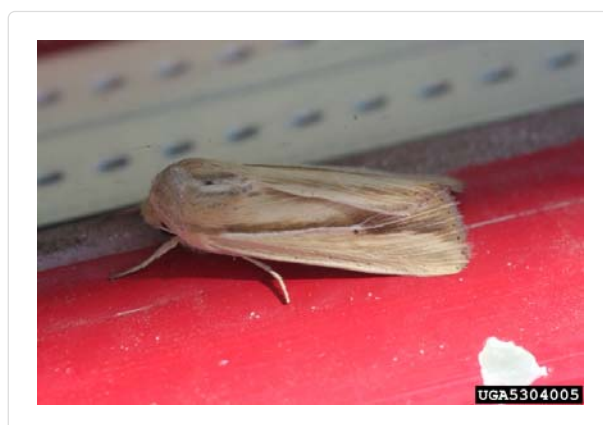


Author: Frank B. Peairs[1] (http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/bspm/people/faculty_indiv/peairs.html), Gary L. Hein & Michael J. Brewer



Identification (and life cycle/seasonal history)

Wheat head armyworm larvae, *Faronta diffusa* (Walker), are grayish or greenish gray caterpillars with distinct white, green, and brown lateral stripes. They are distinguished from other armyworms by a relatively larger head with two straight dark bands over the top, and a slender body. The worms hide around the base of the plants during the day. The adult moth has a dark streak running the length of the forewing. The dark streak is interrupted near the middle of the wing and then continues to the outer wing margin.

This insect spends the winter as a pupa in the soil. Moths emerge to lay eggs in the spring, and larvae can be found in wheat by June. There are two generations of wheat head armyworm per year in northern regions. A second moth flight occurs in late August.

Plant Response and Damage

First generation wheat head armyworm larvae feed on foliage, and later feed on the ripening seed head. They feed on a variety of grasses and cereal crops and seem to prefer the heads. Timothy is considered to be a preferred host. Damage to wheat kernels is similar in appearance to damage by stored grain weevils, with kernels appearing hollowed out.

Management Approaches

No chemical control data or economic threshold studies are available for this insect. Infestations are often limited to field margins. If an outbreak were to occur, the insecticide listed for armyworm (see Armyworm chapter) ([/HPIPM:Small_Grains_Armyworm](#)) should be effective against this insect.

The information herein is supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and that listing of commercial products, necessary to this guide, implies no endorsement by the authors or the Extension Services of Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming or Montana. Criticism of products or equipment not listed is neither implied nor intended. Due to constantly changing labels, laws and regulations, the Extension Services can assume no liability for the suggested use of chemicals contained herein. Pesticides must be applied legally complying with all label directions and precautions on the pesticide container and any supplemental labeling and rules of state and federal pesticide regulatory agencies. State rules and regulations and special pesticide use allowances may vary from state to state: contact your State Department of Agriculture for the rules, regulations and allowances applicable in your state and locality.

This page was last modified 20:15, 8 April 2016 by Bilal Bush ([/User:Bkbush](#)). Based on work by Frank Peairs ([/index.php?title=User:Fbpeairs&action=edit&redlink=1](#)) and Allison Tiffany ([/index.php?title=User:Trebeltrouble&action=edit&redlink=1](#)) and others ([/index.php?title=HPIPM:Wheat_Head_Armyworm&action=credits](#)).

Content is available for non-profit, educational use under our Copyright Agreement ([/BugwoodWiki:Copyright](#)). Developed by the Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health at the University of Georgia (<http://www.bugwood.org>).



(<http://www.bugwood.org>)