

Original Research Article

Seasonal Incidence of Insect-pests, Natural Enemies and Pollinators in *Solanum melongena* L. and Correlation with Weather Parameters

ABSTRACT

The investigation was carried out at K.V.K Instructional Farm of Bhawanipatna, Kalahandi, Odisha, India during the cropping season 2020-21. Fruit and shoot borer, whitefly, and jassid were the most significant pests found in brinjal, while epilachna beetle was of minor importance as it was found in much lower numbers and caused less damage. These were found from 2nd to 16th Standard Meteorological Week (SMW). The population of whitefly had significant negative correlation with morning, evening and mean RH. There was a significant negative correlation of population of jassids with evening and mean RH but significant positive correlation with bright sunshine hours. The population of epilachna had significant negative correlation with morning, evening and mean RH but positive correlation with maximum, minimum and mean temperature. Brinjal Shoot and Fruit Borer (BSFB) infestation on fruit had significant negative correlation with morning, evening and mean RH but positive correlation with maximum and mean temperature. There was a significant positive correlation of BSFB infestation on shoot with maximum, minimum and mean temperature but significant negative correlation with rainfall. The natural enemies found in brinjal ecosystem from 4th to 16th SMW and belonged to ladybird beetles, spiders, preying mantids, black ant, carabid beetle, syrphid flies, damselfly and chrysopids. The population of spiders had significant negative correlation with evening and mean RH but positive correlation with bright sunshine hours. There was a significant negative correlation of population of coccinellids with evening RH. The pollinators recorded from experimental field were honeybee and carpenter bee from 3rd to 16th SMW. Among them, carpenter

bee, *Xylocopa sp.* was the most dominant visitor of brinjal flower in the field and was identified as potentially important in brinjal. The pollinators appeared in higher numbers during the blooming period and was the dominant species found in the field. The population of honey bees had significant negative correlation with evening RH.

Keywords- Seasonal incidence, insect pests, natural enemies, pollinators, *Solanum melongena*, weather parameters

1. INTRODUCTION

Vegetable farming plays an important role in Indian agriculture due to its nutritional, medicinal, and land-commercial value [1]. Brinjal, *Solanum melongena* L., also known as egg-plant or aubergine or guinea squash, is the most popular and important vegetable crop in the world, earning it the title of "king of vegetables." It belongs to the nightshade family Solanaceae and is native to Asia [2]. India is one of the world's largest brinjal producers, with an area of 0.71 million hectares and a production of 13.56 million ton [3]. The major brinjal growing states in India are Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, West-Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan. Brinjal fruits are rich in calcium, phosphorus, iron, and vitamins [4]. Several factors influence the yield, or the amount of harvested crop product in a given area. Insect pests are one of the major factors effecting the yield [5]. Brinjal is attacked by a variety of insect pests shoot borer *Leucinodes orbonalis*, aphids *Aphis gossypii*, leaf miner *Phytomyza atricornis*, white spotted flea beetles *Monolepta signat* and *Chaetocnema basalis*, whitefly *Bemisia tabaci*, thrips *Thrips palmi*, spider mite *Tetranychus urticae*, jassids *Amrasca biguttula biguttula*. Minor pests like leaf roller and hairy caterpillar are also considered the main constraints as it damages the crop throughout the year [6]. 70-92% yield was lost due to the major pests attacking Egg-plant [7]. The most destructive of these is the brinjal shoot and fruit borer, *Leucinodes orbonalis* Guenee [8]. Ladybird beetles, ground beetles, lacewings, praying mantids, spiders, earwigs, predatory bugs, syrphid flies, *Trathala*, true bugs, predatory flies, predatory mites, and other natural enemies are frequently active and play an important role against insect pests of brinjal in the cultivating field. Spiders, ladybird beetles, and black ants are among the most common predators [9]. Brinjal flowers are monoecious and they can pollinate themselves as well as by others. These flowers self-pollinate and produce fruits when pollinators are scarce. Cross-pollination, on the other hand, has been shown to increase fruit set when compared to self-pollinating plants due to heterosis [10]. Vibration is required for pollen release in brinjal flowers. In open conditions, wind can pollinate brinjal flowers, but

in polyhouses, pollination by other insects, such as carpenter bees, is required. Carpenter bees and honey bees can work together to pollinate brinjal. The loss of insect pollinators as a result of agricultural intensification may have a negative impact on brinjal production [11]. A thorough knowledge of seasonal activity of insect-pest helps in developing efficient pest management strategies in a particular set of agro-climatic conditions. Information on the incidence of insect pests, natural enemies and pollinators of brinjal crop ecosystem, particularly in this agro-climatic situation in the recent past, is too little. Therefore, the present investigation was carried out to study the seasonal incidence of insect pests, natural enemies and pollinators.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present investigation was carried out at K.V.K Instructional Farm of Bhawanipatna, Kalahandi, Odisha during the cropping season 2020-21 from November, 2020 to May, 2021. The experimental field was prepared by cross ploughing with a tractor drawn cultivator, followed by harrowing and planking. Weed and crop residues were removed to achieve a weed and stubble-free field. Seedlings of brinjal (Var. VNR-212) were sown in a green-house plugged chamber on November 25, 2020, and after 25 days, seedlings were transplanted in the well pulverised main field with a row to row and plant to plant spacing of 70 × 45 cm. The crop received the recommended fertiliser dose of 120:80:60 kg N, P, and K per hectare. The N, P, and K were applied as a basal dose in furrows at the time of transplanting using Urea, Single Super Phosphate (SSP), and Muriate of Potash (MOP), respectively. Glyphosate was used as a non-selective herbicide and one manual hand weeding was done at 25 DAT to keep the experimental plots weed-free. After 131 days of sowing, harvesting was done manually *i.e.* from March 4, 2021 to April 29, 2021. Total of nine plucking were done until final harvest.

Three leaves from each sampled plant's upper, middle, and lower canopies were selected and examined very carefully and minutely with a hand lens (10x) for the presence of insects. In each replication, the mean population of insects was expressed as the numbers of insects/leaf/plant. Visual search and hand picking were the most common methods for collecting insect pests. Following [12, 13, 14] observation commenced from the first week after transplantation of one-month-old seedlings and lasted until harvest.

2.1 Brinjal pests: For observation on the number of insect pests, four plants per plot were randomly selected excluding the peripheral ones. For epilachna, all the leaves of the four plants were examined and all stages were counted altogether. For whitefly and jassid, three leaves (upper, middle and lower canopy zones) per plant @ four plants/plot were observed. All the observations were taken at 7 days interval starting from 50 DAT (2nd

☰ MW). For fruit and shoot borer infestation, all the shoots of four plants/plot were examined at weekly interval and the means were worked out. Fruit damage was recorded at each harvest and larval counts and bore hole counts were also taken at the same time.

2.2 Natural enemy complex usually found in brinjal field: Natural enemies include general predators like spiders, coccinellids, wood ant and chrysopid. Immature and mature stages were counted altogether. Mixed populations of predatory coccinellids like *Cheilomenes sexmaculata* (Fab.), *Coccinella septempunctata* (L.), *Coccinella transversalis* (Fab.) and *Micraspis* sp. Mature and immature stages were counted altogether. Mixed population of common spiders found includes lynx (*Oxyopes* sp.), jumping (*Phiddipus* sp.) and wolf (*Marpissa* sp.) were counted altogether; for damselfly, score was based on number/plot during observation; for praying mantids like *Mantis religiosa inornata* (Werner) (European mantis) and *Hierodula membranacea* (Burmeister) (Giant asian mantis), rove beetle (*Paederus* sp.), wood ant (*Tetraponera* sp.) and red ant (*Solenopsis* sp.), 4 plants/plot were randomly selected and the number/plant was worked out, taken at 20 days interval starting from 50 DAT (2nd SMW).

2.3 Pollinators in brinjal field: For pollinators, total numbers of bees visiting a plot were observed continuously for ten minutes and the means were worked out. Four species of common bees (Rock bee - *Apis dorsata* Fabr., Indian honey bee - *Apis cerana indica* Fabr., European honey bee - *Apis mellifera* L. and one carpenter bee, *Xylocopa* sp.; Apidae, Hymenoptera) may be found in the experimental fields and these were counted as mixed population altogether. Record of pollinators were taken at 20 days interval from randomly selected 4 plants per plot starting from 50 DAT (2nd SMW). Collected data were subjected to analysis of variance followed by F test.

The data recorded was calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{☰ plant/shoot/fruit infestation} = (\text{Number of infested plant/shoot/fruit} \div \text{Total number of plant/shoot/fruit}) \times 100$$

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Insect Pests

3.1.1 Whitefly

The activity of whitefly *B. tabaci* was started from 2nd SMW and continued up to 16th SMW (Table-1). The whitefly population varied from 6.0 to 20.0 whiteflies/3 leaves per plant. The peak population of *B. tabaci* was 20.0 whiteflies/3 leaves/plant which was recorded during 12th SMW, when the maximum, minimum and mean temperature, morning, evening and mean relative humidity, transformed rainfall and BSH were 37.44 °C, 21.23

°C, 29.34°C, 48.71%, 30.14%, 39.43%, 0.71 mm and 5.84 hrs, respectively. According to correlation studies, the whitefly population had a significant negative correlation with morning, evening and mean relative humidity ($r = -0.545$, $r = -0.780$ and $r = -0.664$), while maximum and minimum temperature and B.S.H. had a positive but nonsignificant correlation ($r = 0.30$, $r = 0.167$, $r = 0.233$ and $r = 0.442$). Rainfall had a nonsignificant negative correlation ($r = -0.003$) (Table-3).

The results of present studies are in accordance with Ashfaq *et al.*, Kaur *et al.* and Sarangdevot *et al.* [15, 16, 17] who reported that the *B. tabaci* population was positively correlated with mean temperature and negatively correlated with mean relative humidity. The positive correlation between the temperature and whitefly population can be attributed to the enhanced rate of development and reproduction of *B. tabaci* and it had been found that the ovipositional activity of *B. tabaci* was maximum between 33 to 37°C. The negative association between the whitefly population and relative humidity and rainfall was due to the *B. tabaci* adults which were largely controlled by rains particularly when there were regular heavy showers and strong winds. Cooler weather and high relative humidity and rainfall are detrimental to whitefly population and spread. Hence, a strategy should be planned to minimize the pest and disease attack either by manipulation in agronomic practices or chemical control. Muthukumar and Kalyanasundarm [18] found that *B. tabaci* observed from the first week after transplanting and persisted throughout the season. Hasan *et al.* [19] recorded *B. tabaci* peak population was seen on the 60 days old crop in 2005 and 2006, while the lowest was on the 30 days old crop. Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters were responsible for 79.3% variation while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only rainfall contributed to 39.6% variation in abundance of whitefly in brinjal ecosystem (Table-4).

Table 1. Incidence of different pests and pollinators in brinjal in different SMW

SMW	Insect pests					Pollinators	
	Whitefly/ 3 leaves	Epilachna (adult)/ Plant	Jassid/ 3 leaves	BSFB shoot infestation percentage	BSFB fruit infestation percentage	Carpenter bee/Plot	Honey bee/Plot
2	6.00	0.50	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

3	7.50	1.00	2.50	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00
4	7.25	1.75	3.50	2.66	0.00	25.00	1.00
5	8.25	2.75	4.00	5.00	0.00	0.33	1.33
6	12.75	3.25	11.40	7.36	0.00	0.40	2.00
7	12.50	4.75	18.00	13.00	0.00	0.50	2.50
8	12.75	5.75	22.00	15.20	4.50	0.66	3.00
9	14.75	6.00	26.00	18.60	8.50	0.75	3.60
10	16.50	7.50	19.20	20.00	15.20	1.00	4.00
11	19.00	9.75	21.00	18.20	16.20	0.60	4.50
12	20.00	12.00	11.20	14.20	18.30	50.00	2.50
13	14.25	13.25	8.20	16.20	10.20	0.33	2.00
14	11.25	12.75	12.80	12.20	14.40	0.25	2.50
15	6.75	13.00	13.40	10.20	15.50	0.13	1.00
16	5.75	10.50	10.60	13.60	16.80	0.00	0.25

Table 2. Incidence of different pollinators in brinjal in different SMW

SMW	Natural enemies				
	¹ Coccinellids/ Plant	² Spiders/ Plant	³ Wood ant /Plant	Damselfly/ Plant	⁴ Chrysopids /Plant
2	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	1.25	3.00	2.00	0.25	0.25
5	1.75	3.30	2.00	0.25	0.20
6	2.55	5.60	3.00	0.15	0.13
7	3.75	4.00	3.00	0.25	0.25

8	3.00	5.00	2.00	0.35	0.30
9	2.66	6.50	2.50	0.50	0.20
10	3.75	7.50	1.50	0.25	0.50
11	3.50	5.80	2.00	0.33	0.35
12	3.00	4.60	2.50	0.33	0.40
13	2.00	4.00	3.25	0.25	0.50
14	2.20	4.60	2.60	0.13	0.35
15	1.60	3.60	2.00	0.00	0.25
16	1.00	4.20	3.00	0.00	0.00

¹five species, ²six species, ³one species and ⁴one species

Table 3 Correlation studies between population of insect pests, pollinators and natural enemies of brinjal with weather parameters

Insect pest, pollinators and natural enemies	T _{Max.}	T _{Min.}	T _{Mean}	M.R.H.%	E.R.H.%	Mean RH%	RF	B.S. H.
Whitefly	0.300	0.167	0.233	-0.545*	-0.78**	- 0.664**	-0.003	0.44 2
Jassid	0.340	0.250	0.297	-0.487	- 0.643**	-0.572*	0.327	0.57 7*
Epilachna Beetle	0.901**	0.917 **	0.929* *	- 0.750* *	-0.523*	- 0.689**	0.172	0.07 3
BFSB	0.548*	0.725	0.693*	-0.312	0.253	-0.092	-	-

fruit infestation		*					0.596*	0.349
BFSB shoot infestation	0.585*	0.421	0.508*	-0.688*	-0.670*	-0.721**	0.082	0.321
Carpenter bee	0.068	0.103	0.089	-0.002	-0.012	-0.006	-0.153	-0.295
Honey bee	0.066	-0.077	-0.012	-0.246	-0.631*	-0.411	0.119	0.386
Spiders	0.199	-0.065	0.056	-0.494	-0.714**	-0.609*	-0.007	0.633*
Coccinellids	-0.116	-0.179	-0.154	-0.166	-0.505*	-0.309	0.069	0.519*
Wood ant	0.189	0.079	0.132	-0.277	-0.219	-0.270	-0.190	0.342
Chrysopids	0.336	0.256	0.299	-0.292	-0.457	-0.374	0.097	-0.132
Damselfly	-0.239	-0.421	-0.347	0.000	-0.447	-0.176	0.024	0.099

(* at 5% level of significance, **at 1% level of significance), T_{Max} . – Maximum temperature, T_{Min} . – Minimum temperature, T_{Mean} – Mean temperature, M.R.H. – Morning relative humidity, E.R.H. - Evening relative humidity, Mean R.H. - Mean relative humidity, RF rainfall, B.S.H. - Bright SunshineHour

Table 4. Multiple effect of abiotic parameters on the incidence of insect-pests, their natural enemies

and pollinator fauna in brinjal ecosystem

Sl. No.	Insect pests, natural enemies and pollinators	Regression	Equation	R ²	F-Value
1.	Whitefly	Multiple	$Y = 46.174 - 1.091 X_1 + 0.968 X_2 + 0.109 X_3 - 0.640 X_4 - 0.357 X_5 + 0.199 X_6$	0.793	5.118*
		Stepdown	$Y = 31.365 - 0.600 X_5$	0.396	9.197**
2.	Epilachna beetle	Multiple	$Y = 22.844 - 0.515 X_1 + 1.105 X_2 - 0.106 X_3 - 0.302 X_4 + 0.991 X_5 - 0.372 X_6$	0.969	42.308**
		Stepdown	$Y = -17.529 + 0.907 X_3$	0.719	35.870**
3.	Jassid	Multiple	$Y = 22.998 - 0.809 X_1 + 1.090 X_2 + 0.223 X_3 - 0.917 X_4 + 2.714 X_5 + 2.169 X_6$	0.600	2.003*
		Stepdown	$Y = 31.365 - 0.600 X_5$	0.396	9.917**
4.	BSFB shoot infestation	Multiple	$Y = 21.076 - 0.239 X_1 + 0.772 X_2 + 0.002 X_3 - 0.678 X_4 + 1.062 X_5 + 1.018 X_6$	0.671	2.037*
		Stepdown	$Y = 39.990 - 0.619 X_5$	0.520	11.940**
5.	BSFB fruit infestation	Multiple	$Y = 34.570 - 4.092 X_1 + 4.482 X_2 - 0.169 X_3 - 0.131 X_4 - 2.966 X_5 + 2.672 X_6$	0.781	1.190
		Stepdown	$Y = -8.080 + 1.022 X_2$	0.520	7.782*
6.	Carpenter bee	Multiple	$Y = 2.039 - 0.016 X_1 + 0.002 X_2 + 0.011 X_3 - 0.052 X_4 + 0.029 X_5 - 0.002 X_6$	0.579	1.834*
		Stepdown	$Y = 5.274 - 0.101 X_4$	0.341	6.724*
7.	Honey bee	Multiple	$Y = 8.097 - 0.210 X_1 + 0.289 X_2 + 0.169 X_3 - 0.407 X_4 - 0.138 X_5 + 0.130 X_6$	0.649	1.849*
		Stepdown	$Y = 7.429 - 0.163 X_2$	0.397	7.233*

8.	Coccinellids	Multiple	$Y = 10.845 - 0.360 X_1 + 0.333 X_2 + 0.078 X_3 - 0.246 X_4 - 0.174 X_5 + 0.320 X_6$	0.619	1.621*
		Stepdown	$Y = 4.929 - 0.160 X_2$	0.373	7.743*
9.	Spiders	Multiple	$Y = 1.160 + 0.105 X_1 - 0.019 X_2 + 0.036 X_3 - 0.152 X_4 + 0.00 X_5 + 0.477 X_6$	0.617	1.611*
		Stepdown	$Y = 11.059 - 0.193 X_2$	0.508	11.353**
10.	Damsel fly	Multiple	$Y = 1.178 + 0.007 X_1 - 0.016 X_2 + 0.011 X_3 - 0.034 X_4 + 0.005 X_5 - 0.063 X_6$	0.634	1.732*
		Stepdown	$Y = 0.481 + 0.140 X_3 - 0.031 X_4$	0.483	4.665*
11.	Chrysopids	Multiple	$Y = 1.183 - 0.011 X_1 + 0.023 X_2 + 0.014 X_3 - 0.041 X_4 + 0.002 X_5 - 0.054 X_6$	0.550	1.222*
		Stepdown	$Y = 0.721 - 0.013 X_4$	0.210	2.916*

(* at 5% level of significance, **at 1% level of significance) (X_1 = Maximum temperature, X_2 = Minimum temperature, X_3 = Morning RH%, X_4 = Evening RH, X_5 = Rainfall, X_6 = Bright sunshine hour)

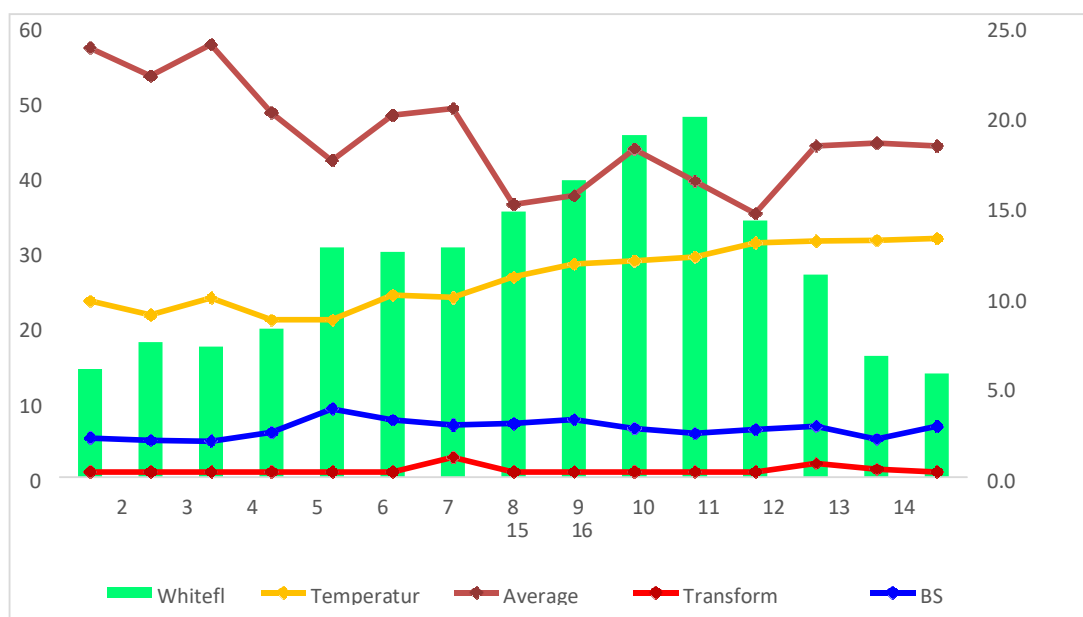


Fig. 1. Population fluctuation of whitefly in different SMW during 2020-21

3.1.2 Jassid

The activity of jassid *Amrasca bigutulla* was started from 2nd SMW and continued up to 16th SMW. The pest population ranged from 1.50 to 26.00 jassid/ 3 leaves per plant (Table-1). The peak population of *A. bigutulla* was (26 jassid/3 leaves/plant), during 9th SMW, when the maximum, minimum and mean temperature, morning, evening and mean relative humidity, transformed rainfall and B.S.H. were 36.96°C, 16.39°C, 26.67°C, 46.86%, 25.86%, 36.36%, 0.71 and 7.16, respectively.

Correlation studies revealed that the *A. bigutulla* population had a significant negative correlation with evening and mean relative humidity ($r = -0.643$, $r = -0.572$, respectively), but a significant positive correlation with B.S.H. ($r = 0.577$). It had a nonsignificant but positive correlation with maximum, minimum and mean temperature and rainfall ($r = 0.34$, $r = 0.25$, $r = 0.297$ and $r = 0.327$, respectively). The morning relative humidity had a negative correlation ($r = -0.487$), but it was not significant (Table-3). Samal and Patnaik [20] reported that the aubergine leafhopper activity under Odisha condition peaked at 55-65 days and 40-50 days after planting during winter 2006-07 and summer 2007, respectively. Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters are responsible for 60.0% variation while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only rainfall contributed 39.6% variation in abundance of jassid in brinjal ecosystem (Table-4).

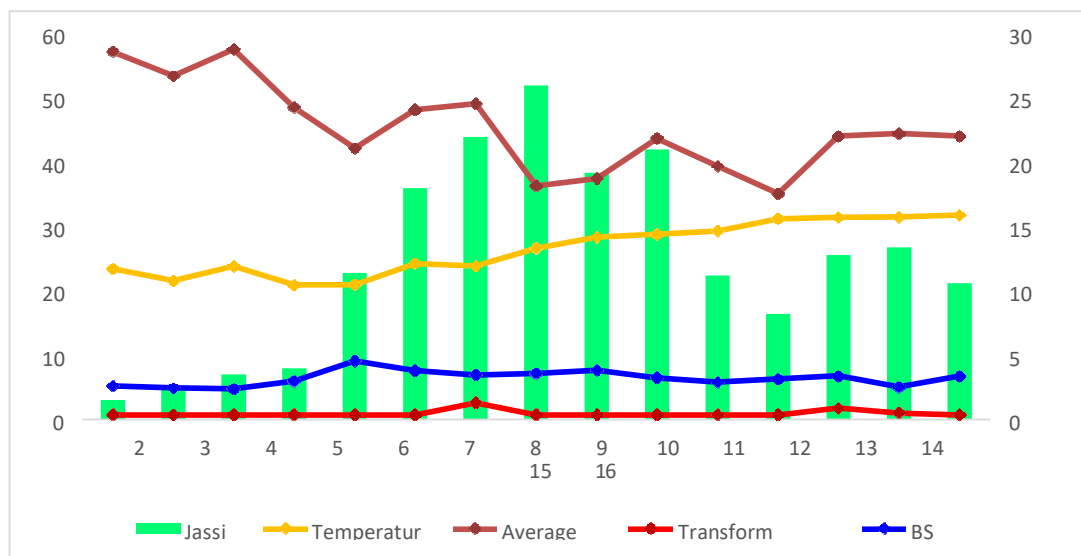


Fig. 2. Population fluctuation of jassid in different SMW during 2020-21

3.1.3 Epilachna Beetle

The brinjal hadda beetle *Epilachna vigintioctopunctata* was initially observed on the 2nd SMW up to 16th SMW. The average number of insects per plant ranged from 0.5 to 13.25. There was a gradual increase in the number

of hadda beetle from January to April reaching at minimum during 2nd SMW. The highest population of 13.25 insects per plant was observed in 13th SMW (Table-1). It had a significant and positive correlation with maximum, minimum and mean temperature ($r = 0.901$, $r = 0.917$ and $r = 0.929$, respectively). While rainfall and BSH had positive but nonsignificant correlation ($r = 0.172$ and $r = 0.073$, respectively). It had significant negative correlation with morning, evening and mean relative humidity ($r = -0.750$, $r = -0.523$ and $r = -0.689$, respectively) (Table-3).

The present findings are in close conformity with the findings of Muthukumar and Kalyansundaram (2003), Shyamprasad and Logiswaran (1997), Raghuraman and Veeraval (1999), Ghosh and Senapati (2001) and [18,21,22,23]. They found positive association with maximum temperature, while the negative association with morning and evening relative humidity. Sarvendra *et al.* (2005) [24] reported negative correlation between humidity and population of *H. vigintioctopunctata*. Temperature and relative humidity may directly affect insect herbivores through the regulation of desiccation regimes and metabolic rates [25]. Suman and Swaminathan (2007) [26] recorded the peak infestation period of both adults and grubs of *Henosepilachna vigintioctopunctata* appeared in last week of February continuing up to April, 2006. The atmospheric temperature had a significant positive correlation with the grubs and adults, while relative humidity had a negative correlation. Chen *et al.* (1989) [27] showed that temperature range of 24-32°C favoured the occurrence of *H. vigintioctopunctata*. Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters were responsible for 96.9% variation, while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only maximum relative humidity contributed 71.9% variation in abundance of epiachna beetle in brinjal ecosystem (Table-4).

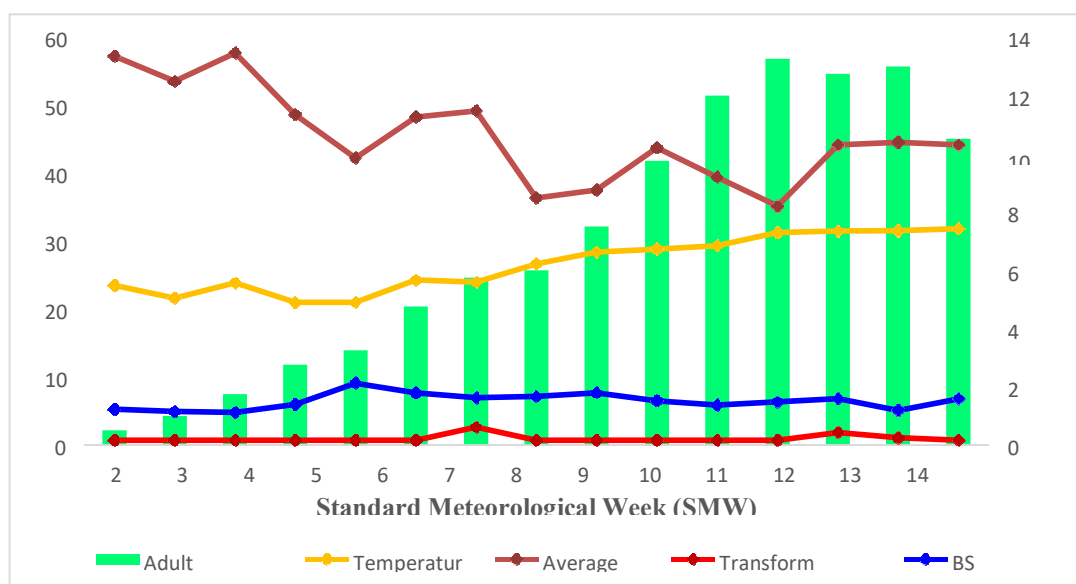


Fig. 3. Population fluctuation of epilachna beetle in different SMW during 2020-21

3.1.4 Fruit and Shoot Borer

The incidence of fruit and shoot borer *L. orbonalis* (BSFB) commenced from 4th SMW with a mean per cent shoot damage of 2.66 % and reached peak (20.00%) during 10th SMW. The incidence on fruit was noticed during 8th SMW (4.50 %) and reached maximum (18.30 %) during 12th SMW (Table-1). The per cent shoot damage was significantly and positively correlated with maximum temperature ($r = 0.585$). While minimum temperature, rainfall and B.S.H. had positive nonsignificant correlation ($r = 0.421$, $r = 0.082$ and $r = 0.321$ respectively) with population. It had significantly negative correlation with morning, evening and mean relative humidity ($r = -0.688$, $r = -0.670$ and $r = -0.721$, respectively). The incidence on fruit was significantly and positively correlated with maximum, minimum and mean temperature ($r = 0.548$, $r = 0.725$ and $r = 0.693$, respectively) and negatively correlated with rainfall ($r = -0.596$). While morning, mean relative humidity and B.S.H. had nonsignificant negative correlation ($r = -0.312$, $r = -0.092$ and $r = -0.349$, respectively) and minimum relative humidity had positive nonsignificant correlation ($r = 0.253$) (Table 3).

The results of the present investigation are corroborative with the result of Muthukumar and Kalyansundaram (2003) [18] who reported that the maximum and minimum temperatures showed positive correlation with *L. orbonalis*, while relative humidity had negative correlation. Shaik (2012) [28] reported *L. orbonalis* population had positively significant relation with maximum and minimum temperatures. Devi (2013) [29] also reported brinjal *L. orbonalis* population had positively significant relation with maximum and minimum temperatures. Kumar *et al.* (2017) [30] also reported that the maximum and minimum temperatures showed positive correlation and evening relative humidity showed negative correlation on the incidence of *L. orbonalis*. Shyam Prasad and Logiswaran (1997) [21] reported that shoot damage showed significantly positive correlation with maximum temperature. The rainfall was found to be nonsignificant by Singh *et al.* (2009) and Naqvi *et al.* (2009) [31,32]. Singh and Guram (1967) [33] and Mall *et al.* (1992) [7] reported borer infestation on shoots a few weeks after transplanting in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, respectively. Infestation of brinjal shoot and fruit borer occurred after 35 days of transplanting at Meerut [34]. Many of the workers have also reported that the incidence of shoot and fruit borer was observed throughout the year in different regions of South East Asia [35].

Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters are responsible for 78.1% variation, while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only rainfall contributed 52.0% variation in infestation

of fruit in brinjal ecosystem (Table-4).

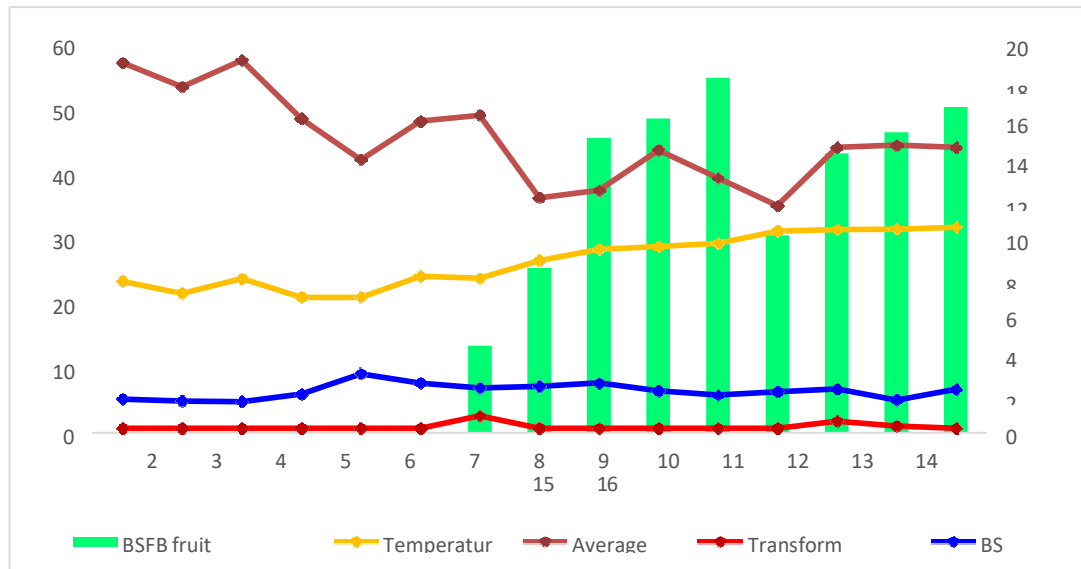


Fig. 4. Relationship of BSFB fruit infestation (%) with different SMW during 2020-21

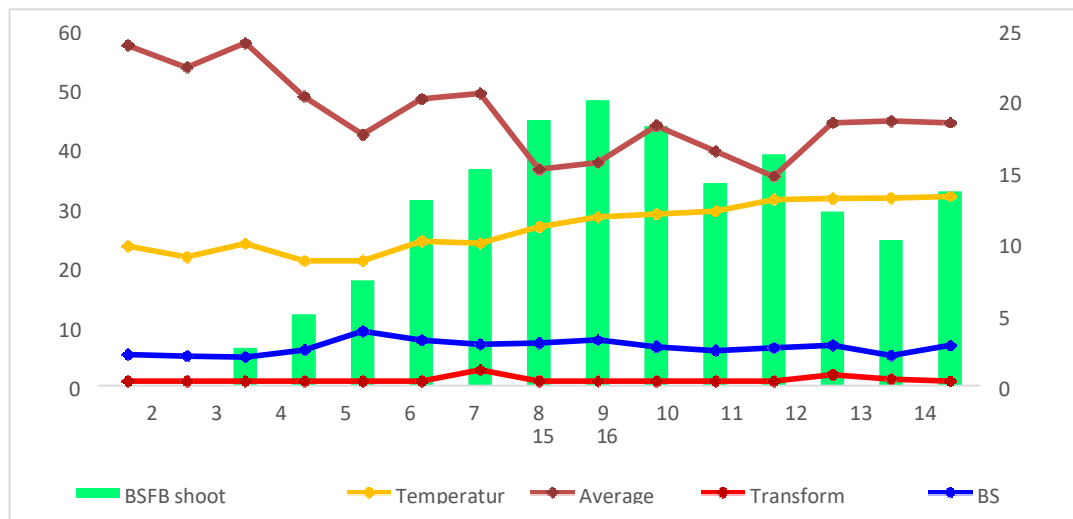


Fig. 5. Relationship of BSFB shoot infestation (%) in different SMW during 2020-21

3.2 Natural Enemies

3.2.1 Coccinellid

The appearance of coccinellid beetles *Coccinella septempunctata*, *Menochilus sexmaculata* and *Coccinella novemnotata* was recorded in the 4th SMW with the population of 1.25 beetles/plant, which reached at its peak (3.75 beetles/plant), during 7th SMW. Beetle population was reached with the maximum and minimum temperature of 32.0 and 16.0 °C and morning and evening RH of 60.86 and 35.57%, respectively (Table-2). The

coccinellid showed a significant positive correlation with B.S.H. ($r = 0.519$) and non-significant positive correlation with rainfall ($r = 0.069$). It had a significant negative correlation with evening relative humidity ($r = -0.505$) while non-significant negative correlation with maximum, minimum and mean temperature and morning and mean relative humidity ($r = -0.116$, $r = -0.179$, $r = -0.154$, $r = -0.166$ and $r = -0.309$, respectively). Grubs and adults of ladybird beetle are predator. They feed on nymph and adult stages of soft bodied insect viz., aphid, jassid, and whitefly (Table-3). Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters were responsible for 61.9% variation while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only minimum temperature contributed 37.3% variation in abundance of coccinellids in brinjal ecosystem (Table-4).

3.2.2 Spider

The appearance of spiders lynx- *Oxyopes* sp., jumping- *Phiddipus* sp., wolf- *Marpissa* sp. were recorded in the 4th SMW with the population of 3 spiders/plant, which reached at its peak (7.50/plant), during 10th SMW (Table-2). Spider population was appeared when the maximum and minimum temperature, morning and evening RH were 37.74 °C, 19.06 °C, 46.71% and 28.29%, respectively. The spiders showed a significant positive correlation with B.S.H. ($r = 0.633$) and non-significant positive correlation with maximum and mean temperature ($r = 0.199$ and $r = 0.056$, respectively) and a significant negative correlation with evening and mean relative humidity ($r = -0.714$ and $r = -0.609$, respectively) while non-significant negative correlation with minimum temperature and morning relative humidity and rainfall ($r = -0.065$, $r = -0.494$, $r = -0.154$ and $r = -0.007$, respectively) (Table-3). Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters were responsible for 61.7% variation while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only minimum temperature contributed 50.8% variation in abundance of spiders in brinjal ecosystem (Table-4).

3.2.3 Wood Ant

The appearance of wood ants was recorded in the 4th SMW with the population of 2/plant, which reached at its peak (3.25 per plant), during 13th SMW (Table-2). Wood ant population was reached when the maximum and minimum temperature, morning and evening RH were 40.29 °C, 22.20 °C, 44.00% and 26.29%, respectively. The wood ant showed a non-significant positive correlation with maximum, minimum, and mean temperature, BSH ($r = 0.189$, $r = 0.079$, $r = 0.132$ and $r = 0.342$, respectively) and non- significant negative correlation with morning, evening and mean relative humidity and Rainfall ($r = -0.277$, $r = -0.219$, $r = -0.270$ and $r = -0.190$, respectively) (Table-3).

3.2.4 Chrysopid

The appearance of chrysopids was recorded in the 4th SMW with the population of 0.25/plant, which reached at its peak (0.5/plant), during 10th SMW (Table-2). Chrysopids population was reached when the maximum and minimum temperature, morning and evening RH were 37.74 °C, 19.06 °C, 46.71% and 26.29%, respectively. The chrysopids showed a non-significant positive correlation with maximum, minimum, and mean temperature and rainfall ($r = 0.336$, $r = 0.256$, $r = 0.299$ and $r = 0.097$, respectively) and non-significant negative correlation with maximum, minimum and mean relative humidity and BSH ($r = -0.292$, $r = -0.457$, $r = -0.374$ and $r = -0.132$, respectively) (Table-3). Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters are responsible for 55.0% variation while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only evening relative humidity contributed 21.0% variation in abundance of chrysopids in brinjal ecosystem (Table-4).

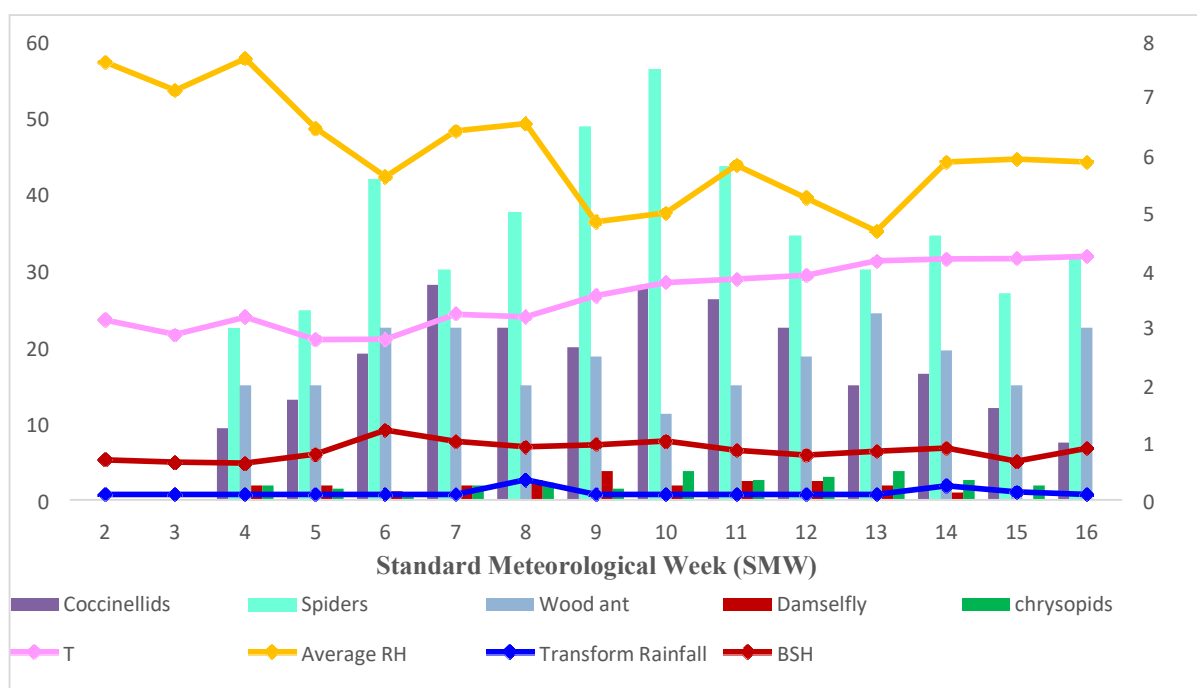


Fig. 6. Population fluctuation of natural enemies at different SMW during 2020-21

3.2.5 Damselfly

The appearance of damselfly was recorded in the 4th SMW with the population of 0.25/plant, which reached at its peak (0.5/plant), during 10th SMW (Table-2). Damselfly population was reached when the maximum and minimum temperature, morning and evening RH were 37.74 °C, 19.06 °C, 46.71% and 26.29%, respectively. The damselfly showed a non-significant positive correlation with rainfall and B.S.H. ($r = 0.024$ and $r = 0.099$,

respectively) and non-significant negative correlation with maximum, minimum and mean temperature and evening and mean relative humidity ($r = -0.239$, $r = -0.421$, $r = -0.347$, $r = -0.447$ and $r = -0.176$, respectively) (Table-3). Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters are responsible for 63.4% variation while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only morning and evening RH together contributed 48.3% variation in abundance of damselfly in brinjal ecosystem (Table-3).

3.3 POLLINATOR

3.3.1 Carpenter Bee

Abundance of flower visiting carpenter bees *Xylocopa* sp. was evaluated at flowering stage in brinjal crop. It was first appeared in the 3rd SMW with the population of 4/plot, which reached at its peak at (35/plot), during 12th SMW (Table-1). Its abundance was mainly in peak time of flowering. Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters were responsible for 57.9% variation, while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only maximum relative humidity contributed 34.1% variation in abundance of carpenter bee in brinjal ecosystem (Table-4)

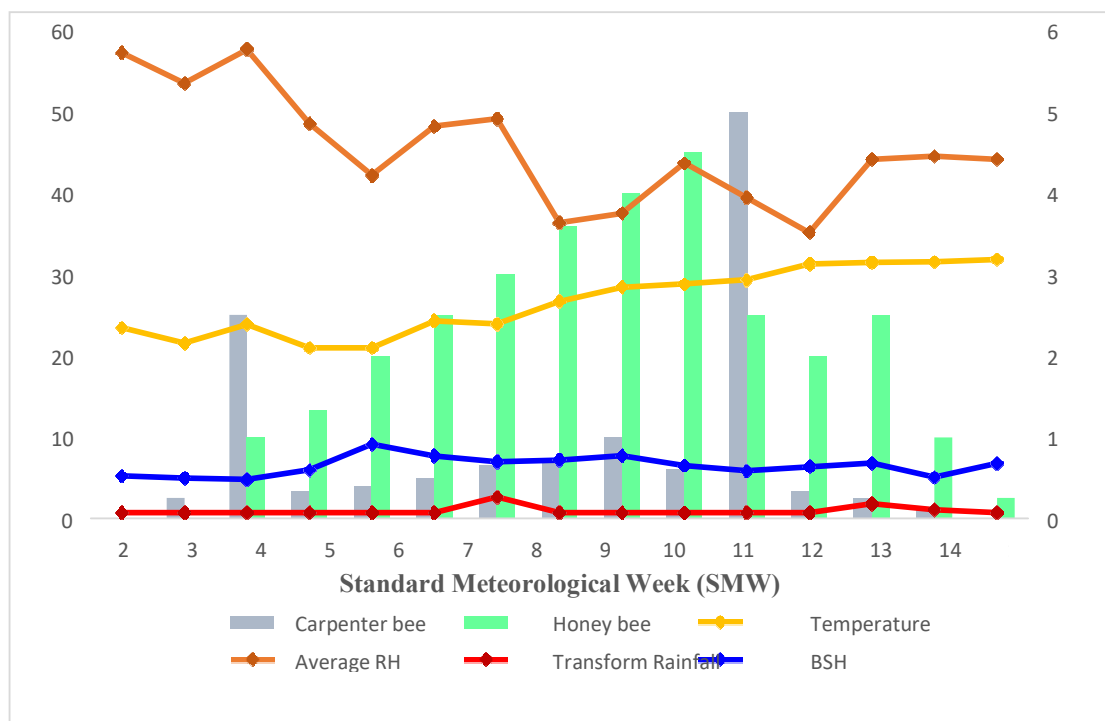


Fig. 7. Population fluctuation of pollinators in different SMW during 2020-21

3.3.2 Honey Bee

Abundance of flower visiting honey bees *A. mellifera*, *A. dorsata* and *A. cerena indica* were evaluated at

flowering stage in brinjal. It was first appeared in the 3rd SMW with the population of 10/plot, which reached at its peak at (30/plot), during 11th SMW. Its abundance was mainly in peak time of flowering (Table-1). It was significantly negatively correlated with, evening relative humidity ($r = -0.631$) (Table-3). Regression analysis showed that all six weather parameters were responsible for 64.9% variation, while in step-down regression analysis it was observed that only minimum temperature contributed 39.7% variation in abundance of honey bee in brinjal ecosystem (Table-4).

4. CONCLUSION

During the present investigation, it was found that brinjal fruit and shoot borer, whitefly, and jassid were the most significant pests found in brinjal, while epilachna beetle was of minor importance because it was found in much lower numbers and caused less damage, so it could be considered a minor pest. Among the natural enemies, ladybird beetles *M. crocea*, *C. septempunctata*, *C. transversalis*, and *C. sexmaculata*, spiders *Phiddipus sp.*, *Oxyopes sp.* and *Marpissa sp.* and black ant *C. compressus* were the dominating ones. Among the pollinators, *Xylocopa sp.* was the most dominant visitor of brinjal flower and was identified as potentially important in brinjal. *Xylocopa sp.* is known to provide effective fruit setting in brinjal. The pollinators appeared in higher numbers during the blooming period and was the dominant species found in the field. The future studies should be planned to study the life table parameters of brinjal shoot and fruit borer.

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