

Field crickets

Black field cricket

Teleogryllus oceanicus, *Teleogryllus commodus*

Distribution

Field crickets live in soil cracks in damp spots near drains and water channels, and in loam soils which form deep cracks. They have been pests at Babinda and near Clare in the Burdekin region.

Damage

Crickets damage plant cane, mainly in wet areas or in heavy soil where setts are planted close to the surface. Adults and nymphs eat out swelling eyes on setts, leaving a shallow, cleanly scooped-out hole. They also eat young shoot spikes as they emerge above ground.

A lot of damage to buds causes gappy stands. Larger gaps need replanting. Damaged shoots usually sideshoot with little yield loss.

Description

Adults and nymphs are shining black or brown with jumping hind legs. Antennae are long and slender (Photo 1). Females have a long ovipositor at the tip of the abdomen.

Biology

In wet areas, crickets live in burrows and cracks in soil along banks of channels and drains. Under dry conditions they shelter in deep cracks, moving to the surface when soil becomes wet. When furrows in plant cane are wet, the crickets can be found under loose soil crumbs in the hilled-up portion of the interspace during the day. They emerge to feed at night. Nymphs behave like adults. Crickets can be detected by the calling songs of the males.

Management

Crickets rarely cause problems. No insecticide is registered for cricket control in sugarcane. Slightly more soil cover over setts reduces eye damage by crickets.



Photo 1: Adult field cricket.