

# Froghopper

## Sugarcane froghopper

*Euryaulax carnifex*

### Distribution

Sugarcane froghopper is native to northern Australia. It has been found in cane grown in the Herbert Valley, the Tully district and at Gordonvale.

### Damage

Infested fields look 'scorched' (Photo 1). Fresh damage appears as short yellow and red streaks in the top leaves. Yellow streaks extend and develop red central stripes. Khaki coloured dead areas occur where streaks reach leaf edges. Advanced symptoms are seen on fifth and older leaves.

### Description

Adults are 8 mm long. They have an orange head and body, and dark purple-black forewings with central orange patches (Photo 2). They are attracted to light.

Nymphs are yellow or pink and live on roots inside foam, which looks like spittle.

### Biology

Adults lay eggs in the soil. Eggs laid in autumn do not hatch until the following summer, usually in December. Nymphs live underground in cracks, at the surface under cane trash, or among stilt roots at the base of sugarcane stems, and suck sap from cane roots. Nymphs can be hard to find.

Adults suck sap from leaves and inject toxins which slow water and nutrient flow. Affected tissues turn yellow and die. Badly infested fields have lower growth, due to loss of healthy leaf area.

There are usually three and sometimes four generations of froghoppers each year, although later generations overlap.

### Management

Froghoppers prefer some varieties over others. Different varieties also show different leaf symptoms. There is no



Photo 1: Froghopper-damaged cane.



Photo 2: Froghopper.

insecticide registered for control of froghoppers. Overseas experience suggests that insecticide use would be unprofitable and impractical.

Assassin bugs, wasps, and fungal diseases affect adult froghoppers. Nymphs are attacked by larvae of a hover fly.