

Scientific name

Di cladispa armigera (Olivier)

What it does

Rice hispa scrapes the upper surface of leaf blades leaving only the lower epidermis. It also tunnels through the leaf tissues. When damage is severe, plants become less vigorous.

Why and Where it occurs

Close spacing causes greater leaf densities that favor the buildup of the rice hispa. The presence of grassy weeds in and near rice fields as alternate hosts harbor and encourage the pest to develop. Heavily fertilized field also encourages the damage.

Heavy rains, especially in premonsoon or earliest monsoon periods, followed by abnormally low precipitation, minimum day-night temperature differential for a number of days, and high RH are favorable for the insect's abundance.

The rice hispa is common in rainfed and irrigated wetland environments and is more abundant during the rainy season.

How to identify

Check for the following damage:

- scraping of the upper surface of the leaf blade
- leaving only the lower epidermis as white streaks parallel to the midrib
- irregular translucent white patches that are parallel to the leaf veins
- withering of damaged leaves
- whitish and membranous leaves

Rice field appears burnt when severely infested.

Hispa feeding damage is similar to feeding marks caused by flea beetles. To confirm cause of damage, check for insect presence, and the characteristic feeding marks:

- Elongated, clear feeding marks
- White streaks of uneaten lower epidermis between the parallel leaf veins

How to manage

- Avoid over fertilizing the field
- Keep close plant spacing
- Encourage biological control agents: small wasps (attack egg and larvae), reduviid bug (attack adults), three fungal pathogens (attack the adults)
- Spray chlorpyrifos 20% EC @2.5ml/L of water, monocrotophos 1.6ml/L of water.

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Elongated feeding marks of rice hispa

