

wings are light straw light straw in colour. Female possesses forewing of a lighter colour and nearly white hind wings.

**3. Pink Stem borer : *Sesamia inferens*: Noctuidae: Lepidoptera**

Symptom of damage: Presence of dead heart.

Nature of damage: The young larvae after hatching, congregate inside the leaf whorls and feed on folded central leaves causing typical 'pin hole' symptoms. Severe feeding results in killing of the central shoot and consequent dead heart formation. Usually the second instar larvae migrate to neighbouring plants by coming out from the whorls and suspending themselves from the plants by silken threads, these are then easily blown off by wind to other plants. These larvae penetrate in the stem and cause tunneling resulting in stunting, infested plants become weak and bear very small earheads. The weakened stems, especially of tall local varieties, break easily during heavy rains or with high velocity winds.

Egg: Creamy white spherical eggs are laid in batches in between leaf sheaths and stem of a plant.

Larva: The larvae penetrate the stems directly and may kill the young plants. The fully developed caterpillar is cylindrical, pinkish dorsally and whitish ventrally. Larvae can migrate from plant to plant.

Pupa: Pupation occurs inside the stem, pupae are robust and light brown in colour.

Adult: Adults are stout, straw coloured and are nocturnal in habit.

## **II. LEAF FEEDERS**

**5. Slug caterpillar: *Thosea apierens*: Cochlididae: Lepidoptera**

Symptom of attack: Defoliation.

Nature of damage: They feed on the leaves and defoliate. Apart from this they cause lot of irritation on the people who work in the field. Harvest is made difficult and it is reported the even cattle do not relish the fodder.

Life stages: Slug is found to appear in a severe form in Coimbatore.

**6. Leaf roller: *Marasmia trapezalis* : Pyralidae: Lepidoptera**

Symptom of attack: Rolled up leaves in which the larvae are found feeding and longitudinal patches on leaves whose tips dry are the clear symptoms.

Nature of damage: The leaf roller becomes quite serious on young crops and feeds on the leaf epidermis. It causes longitudinal patches on the leaves and the tips of the leaves dry up. It is only a minor pest and rarely becomes serious. The varieties with broad leaves are attacked more severely.

Egg: Eggs are laid on young leaves.

Larva: A caterpillar is greenish yellow and is provided with setae over its body. Head and thoracic shield are brownish in colour. When full grown the caterpillar measures about 20 mm.

Pupa: Pupation takes place within the rolled leaf.

Adult: Adults are grayish with shining coloured patterns. Anal margins are darker in colour.