

A new record of burrowing bug, *Microporus nigrita* (F.) in Rajasthan

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Seed spices are the most remunerative and important export oriented commodities the arid and semi-arid regions of India. About ten per cent of the seed spice production is exported in raw as well as value added products realizing foreign exchange. India produces a wide variety of seed spices like coriander, cumin, fennel, fenugreek, etc. Seed spice crops face numerous biotic and abiotic stresses. Among biotic stress insect-pests are one of the major limiting factors for higher production of seed spices.

During roving survey of farmers fields in Gram Panchayat Kanoota, Panchayat Samiti Sujangarh, district Churu (Rajasthan) during 2nd week of November, 2016-17, recorded burrowing bug *Microporus nigrita* (F.). The burrowing bug (Fig. 1) was observed on fennel, fenugreek and wild weed species of *Chenopodium*. The percent seedling mortality caused by this pest was more than 50 percent in fennel, 30 per cent in fenugreek and 15 per cent in *Chenopodium* sp. The species was identified at Division of Entomology, IARI, New Delhi. This species was described from J & K State by Bhagat (2015) under systematic checklist of the valid species/genera under pentatomoidea of J & K state.



Fig 1. Adult of *Microporus nigrita*

Burrowing bugs belong to family Cydnidae: heteroptera and most of these bugs are black or brown, usually 2-20 mm long, live deep in the soil and are root feeder. Although the family is regarded as quite primitive, its species possess some derived characters (broad and flattened head, often armed with rows of strong setae or spine, broadened and heavily spinose anterior tibiae, tarsi reduced or even absent in a few taxa) which make them very well adapted for digging in the ground (Becker, *et al.*, 2000). They mostly attack field crops and cereals sometimes also fruits and legumes (Schumacher, 1916; Reclaire, 1936; Petrucha, 1949; Medvedev *et al.*, 1952; Otten 1956, Putschkov, 1972). The development of crop plants stops when 6 - 10 individuals are found in 1m² area (Petrucha, 1949). It is generally found in sandy area and many occur up to 15 cm deep at the roots of weeds and grasses. The early root damage caused by burrowing bug causes seedling mortality and ultimately reduce the yield and commercial value of the crop.

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References

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