



Forest Threats

Eucalyptus snout beetle / Gonipterus sp.n.2

Tree Protection Co-operative Programme

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Insect pests

Eucalyptus snout beetle / *Gonipterus* sp.n.2

Gonipterus sp.n.2

SYMPTOMS

Larvae of the Eucalyptus snout beetle feed on the new flush of *Eucalyptus* trees. The first instar larvae feed on the epidermis of the leaves creating tracks on the leaf surface. The third and fourth instar larvae will consume the entire leaf. The adult Eucalyptus snout beetle feed on the older leaves of the *Eucalyptus* trees along the edges, creating a scalloped appearance (Tooke 1955).

BIOLOGY

The adult female will oviposit between 4 and 20 eggs on a leaf and cover them with a frass excrement. The frass excrement hardens and protects the eggs. The larvae will go through four larval stages before reaching the pre-pupa phase. During the pre-pupa stage the larvae will stop feeding, drop to the ground and burrow into the soil. They pupate in the soil and the adults emerge in search of a new host plant. The development time of the different stages of the life cycle is temperature dependant and it may take up to 90 days for the life cycle to complete. The female beetles will start to oviposit two to three weeks after mating. A single female can produce up to 270 eggs. The adult beetles can live up to 3 months. One and a half to two generations per year can occur in South Africa (Tooke 1955).

MANAGEMENT

A biological control, *Anaphes nitens*, was released in 1926 and is established throughout the country. However, high infestations of *Gonipterus* sp.n.2 still occur and thus application of insecticides is sometimes required. Efforts to import and release other biological control agents are ongoing. Selection of more tolerant planting material is also possible.

