



Gray pineapple mealybug adult.

Source:

<http://www.cabicompendium.org/cpic/datasheet>

## EXOTIC THREAT: GREY PINEAPPLE MEALYBUG

### What is it?

The grey pineapple mealybug (*Dysmicoccus neobrevipes*) does not in itself damage pineapples but has been implicated as a vector of mealybug wilt and is considered one of the most economically important mealybug pests in Hawaii and is the principle cause of pineapple crop failure.

### What do I look for?

The grey pineapple mealybug gives birth to about 350, sometimes as many as 10 00, live young (nymphs) over 30 days. These larvae, called crawlers have flattened bodies and long hairs which aid their dispersal by wind. This stage lasts on average about 35 days, and a little longer for males.

Adults appear predominantly grey in colour due to their waxy coating, making it easy to distinguish from the pink mealybug also known as the pineapple mealybug (*Dysmicoccus brevipes*) which is common in pineapples in Australia. The body is broadly oval and measures about 1 ½ millimetres long and 1 millimetre wide. The back is heavily coated with tiny tufts of white mealy wax and short filaments also extend from the entire body.

The grey pineapple mealybug is normally found on the leaves, stems, aerial roots and flower and fruit clusters.

There are two types of pineapple wilt, "quick wilt" and "slow wilt". "Quick wilt" is characterised by a discolouration of the leaves to yellows or reds and the loss of rigidity in the leaves. With "slow wilt" there are fewer colour changes. Leaf tips are browned, outer leaves droop and the leaf is flaccid to touch.

### Where is it found?

The grey pineapple mealybug is present in most pineapple growing regions including Fiji, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Micronesia, Philippines, Taiwan and all of the major Hawaiian Islands.



Symptoms of mealybug wilt.

Source:

[www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/tropical/cal/lecture\\_30/72m.jpg](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/tropical/cal/lecture_30/72m.jpg)



Mealybug infestation

Source:

[hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/tropical/lecture\\_30/72m.jpg](http://hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/tropical/lecture_30/72m.jpg)

## Reporting

If you suspect you may have seen the grey pineapple mealybug, you should report it immediately to maximise the chances of eradicating this pest before it can become established in Australia.

Growers may report suspected exotic pests to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881) or can directly contact their relevant state agriculture or primary industries department.

To minimise the risk of disease spread, samples should not be moved until they have been checked by an expert.

This fact sheet is part of the Pineapple Industry Biosecurity Plan. For more information about the Biosecurity Plan, please contact Plant Health Australia.

## Sources

[http://www.extento.hawaii.edu/Kbase/crop/Type/d\\_neobre.htm](http://www.extento.hawaii.edu/Kbase/crop/Type/d_neobre.htm)

Rohrbach, K. G., and Johnson, M. W. (2003). Pests, Diseases and Weeds. In 'The Pineapple - Botany, Production and Uses' edited by D. P. Bartholomew and R. E. Paull and K. G. Rohrbach. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, UK. 301 p.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact  
Plant Health Australia

Phone: +61 2 6260 4322

Fax: +61 2 6260 4321

[www.planthealthaustralia.com.au](http://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au)

Disclaimer: The material in this publication is for general information only and no person should act, or fail to act on the basis of this material without first obtaining professional advice. Plant Health Australia and all persons acting for Plant Health Australia expressly disclaim liability with respect to anything done in reliance on this publication.