

Cotton boll weevil

What is it?

The cotton boll weevil, *Anthonomus grandis*, is a major pest of cotton, attacking the developing squares and bolls. Feeding damage causes young squares to shed and damages the lint in older bolls. Infestations in the USA have cost hundreds of millions of dollars to control.

The cotton boll weevil has been successfully eradicated from several regions of USA using area wide management programs.

What does it look like?

Adult weevils are a greyish-brown with a body about 5 mm in length and conspicuous snout (which is an additional 3 mm long). The larvae, which grow inside developing squares and bolls, are white, legless grubs that grow up to 13 mm in length. The head and chewing mouthparts are brown, with a curved and wrinkled body.

What can it be confused with?

The cotton boll weevil resembles some native weevil species. However, no weevils in Australia attack cotton. Therefore, any weevils found feeding on cotton plants or found within cotton bolls should be reported immediately.



Agricultural Research Service (USA) (K2742-6)

Adult weevil on a cotton boll



Clemson University, USDA Cooperative Extension Slide Series (1435143).
www.invasive.org

Typical egg-laying puncture (upper right edge on the left boll) and feeding puncture (on square on right)



COTTON
AUSTRALIA

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Cotton boll weevil larvae within a developing cotton boll

Clemson University, USDA Cooperative Extension Slide Series (1235199).
www.invasive.org

What should I look for?

Look for small puncture marks at the side of flower buds. Egg-laying punctures are covered with a sticky secretion that hardens to form a wart-like protuberance that can be easily seen and felt.

How does it spread?

Adult weevils are strong fliers and can disperse long distances on wind currents (up to 72 km has been recorded). In trade, boll weevils may be carried with cotton seeds or bolls, with raw cotton and various cotton products.

Where is it now?

The cotton boll weevil is thought to be native to Central America from where it spread to both North and South America.



Cotton boll weevil pupae within a damaged boll

Clemson University, USDA Cooperative Extension Slide Series (1235198).
www.invasive.org

How can I protect my farm from Cotton boll weevil?

Check your farm frequently for the presence of new pests and unusual symptoms. Make sure you are familiar with common cotton pests so you can tell if you see something different.

If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE
1800 084 881**

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