

# Red banded mango caterpillar



Plant Health  
AUSTRALIA

## What is red banded mango caterpillar?

Red banded mango caterpillar (RBMC; *Deanolis sublimbalis*) is a pest of mango in tropical parts of Asia where it causes commercial losses in the order of 10-15%. It is considered a serious threat to Australia's commercial mango industry.

## What does it look like?

The larvae are plump and glossy with distinctive bright white and dark red bands and they have a black collar near the head. More than one larva can be present in each fruit.

Eggs are laid by the fawn coloured adult moth on the peduncle (fruit stalk) and after 7-8 days hatch into larvae, which tunnel into the flesh and then into the seed. Larvae feed for 15-20 days and pupate in the soil for around 20 days, before emerging as the adult moth to continue egg-laying. The biology and life history of this caterpillar is not completely understood.

## What can it be confused with?

Dark streaks on the mango skin may be similar to those caused by mango pulp weevil and mango seed weevil.

## What should I look for?

An obvious external sign of infestation is the presence of a liquid exudate from the mouth of a tunnel chewed by the caterpillar through the skin. It trickles down to the tip of the fruit and accumulates. Although almost clear when fresh, the liquid darkens and shows up as a dark streak on the skin leading to a dark spot at the fruit tip.

Early signs of infestation may not be as easily seen and could include small darkened boreholes on the fruit caused by entering larvae.

Damaged fruit may be attacked secondarily by fruit flies or various decay organisms and may fall from the tree prematurely.



Adult moths are fawn coloured

PaDIL (Lindsay Chandler)



Larvae have distinctive dark red bands

PaDIL (Glynn Maynard)



Larvae are usually seen tunnelling in the seed

PaDIL (Lindsay Chandler)

EXOTIC PEST – CALL THE EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE IF SUSPECTED





To inspect fruit for RBMC, cut it open to expose the inside of the seed

*PaDIL (Lindsay Chandler)*

To inspect fruit for RBMC, cut it open to expose the inside of the seed. The larvae will most likely be seen tunnelling in the seed, but can also be present in the flesh.

### How does it spread?

RBMC is spread through movement of infested plant material.

### Where is it now?

RBMC exists in India, Burma, the Philippines, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. It may be more widely distributed in South-East Asia than records indicate. Since 1990 it has been detected on several Torres Strait Islands and is now known to occur at several locations near the northern tip of Cape York Peninsula, but it has not reached any commercial mango plantations.

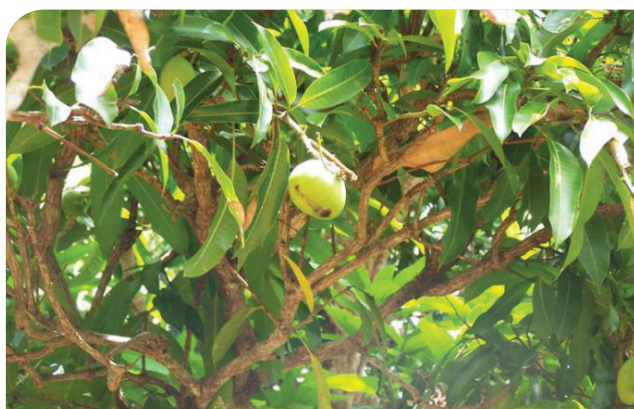
### How can I protect my orchard from red banded mango caterpillar?

Keep watch for this pest during the fruiting period and advise Biosecurity Queensland of any suspected infestation. Due to the isolation of RBMC detections on Cape York Peninsula and the Torres Strait, it poses no immediate threat to the mango industry. The detections should also not affect national or international trade from commercial mango production areas. Biosecurity Queensland regularly surveys Cape York Peninsula for RBMC and other mango pests.



Darkened borehole on the fruit caused by entering larvae

*DEEDI*



Liquid exudate shows up as a dark streak on the skin leading to a dark spot at the fruit tip

*PaDIL (Lindsay Chandler)*

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**IF YOU SEE ANYTHING UNUSUAL,  
CALL THE EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE**

**1800 084 881**



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