Sri Lanka Weevil (*Myllocerus undatus*)

**Introduced:** 2000 (Broward County); Native to Sri Lanka.

**Current Infestation (as of May 2006):** Broward, Collier, Hendry, Lee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Orange, Palm Beach, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, and St. Lucie Counties.

**Description/Biology:** The life cycle of this weevil under laboratory conditions is less than 2 months. Adults lay their eggs in the soil. Larvae are small, creamy white, and legless.

The larvae are root feeders and are very difficult to detect. It is unknown what types of roots they prefer to feed on. The larvae pupate in the soil and are also difficult to detect.

Adults are about 1/4 inch long (6 mm), whitish-gray, and are commonly found on foliage of their host plants.

**Adults of his insect resemble a native weevil, *Artipus floridanus* (little leaf notcher).**

The Sri Lanka weevil has a pronounced spur on its legs (femur) and has a slightly yellow head.

**Seasonality:** Adult feeding is most noticeable when plants are producing new foliage. The Sri Lanka weevil is particularly abundant in northern Miami-Dade and southern Broward County.

**Hosts:** The adults feed on a wide range of host plants. In Florida host records include at least 68 tropical fruit trees, palms, ornamental plants, upland cotton, and citrus. In south Florida, several tropical fruit trees such as lychee and mango trees are particular favorites.

**Importance:** This pest is becoming an increasingly more important pest due to the damage it causes and that it has been found on plants that have been shipped to other states.

**Damage:** Larvae feed on the roots of plants but the level of damage they cause is unknown. Until more information about where exactly the larvae are feeding and...
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the types of plant roots they are feeding on, controlling the pest at this stage is not advised.

Adults can cause severe feeding damage to the foliage. Damage can range from notching on the leaf margins in an irregular pattern to a much more extensive feeding along the leaf veins. Many times this damage is cosmetic and the plant recovers. Small plants and young trees may need protection.

**Management:**
In the spring with when new leaves are flushing out start inspecting for this insect and its characteristic leaf notching. Be aware that other types of insect pests can cause similar damage.

**Homeowner** - There are no pesticides registered for homeowner use for this pest on dooryard fruit trees. Older trees can tolerate the feeding damage. Younger trees can be protected by covering the tree canopy in fiberglass window screening to prevent the adults from feeding on the leaves.

If necessary, severe infestations on ornamental trees can be controlled by using insecticides which include carbaryl (Sevin), acephate (Orthene) or a pyrethroid labeled for leaf-feeding insects. Always follow label instructions.

Weevils can also be removed from ornamental or fruit trees in your yard by holding an open, inverted umbrella under a branch and shaking it vigorously to knock the weevils into the umbrella. The weevils can then be dumped into a bucket of soapy water.

**Professional and Grower - Laboratory and field tests indicate that adult weevils can be controlled with foliar applications of bifenthrin (Talstar), acephate (i.e. Orthene) or carbaryl (Sevin). Other types of pyrethroids will likely provide sufficient control. No natural enemies have been identified, although some adult weevils have died from naturally occurring fungal diseases. The use of entomopathogenic nematodes may offer control of larvae, however, until more information can be gathered on the location and feeding habits of the larvae, it is not suggested.**

**Websites:**
- [http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/enpp/ento/weevil-pest-alert.htm](http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/enpp/ento/weevil-pest-alert.htm)

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