

Pest Profile



Photo credit: Adult: Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org
Nymph: Eugene E. Nelson, Bugwood.org

Common Name: Potato psyllid

Scientific Name: *Bactericera cockerelli*

Order and Family: Hemiptera; Psyllidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg		-Very small, football shaped eggs found on the edge of the underside of leaves.
Nymph	<2 mm	-Flattened, with waxy projections around body -Pale brown to tan when young, but greenish with wing pads when older
Adult	2 mm	-Black with white markings (band on first abdominal segment and inverted "V" on last segment) -Clear wings rest roof-like over body

Type of feeder: Piercing-sucking

Host plants: Tomato and potato and other solanaceous plants (eggplant, pepper, some nightshade)

Description of Damage: Adults and immatures pierce and feed from the phloem of host plants. Immatures produce damage by injecting a toxic saliva while they feed, which produces a plant response termed "psyllid yellows." In addition to yellowing (initially around leaf edges; may be purpling in some varieties), feeding may cause retarded plant growth and leaf curling. Severe damage may cause apparently rosetted leaves on axillary buds or produce aerial tubers. Their feeding reduces the size of potato plants and causes premature sprouting and rough skin. Tomato damage produces small, soft, poor-quality fruits. Psyllids are also vectors for the bacterium *Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum*, which causes Zebra chip.

References:

Cranshaw, W. (2004). *Garden insects of North America: The ultimate guide to backyard bugs*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources. (2007). Potato Psyllid. *Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program* [database]. Retrieved from:
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