

THE LANTANA SAP SUCKER

(*Falconia intermedia*)

A natural enemy of

LANTANA (*Lantana camara*)

in South Africa

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DESCRIPTION

The adult is small (about 2mm in length), with a dark brown body and pale legs. The adults fly readily and are extremely active.

LIFE CYCLE

The adults lay eggs singly or in small groups on the leaf under surface. The immature stages (called nymphs) emerge from the eggs and usually occur in large numbers on the leaf under surface. Nymphs are green, wingless and take about 18 days to moult into the adult stage.

Newly moulted adults take a few days to begin egg laying, and continue to produce on average 4 eggs per day for the duration of their life span (about 2 months). The insect has a continuous life cycle with no pupating life stage, and may have up to 9 generations a year.

FEEDING DAMAGE

The adults and nymphs are sap-suckers that feed on the leaves of lantana. Feeding is indicated by the presence of white chlorotic specks on the upper leaf surface, and spherical dark droplets on the leaf under surface.

IMPACT ON LANTANA

Severe feeding damage can cause entire shrubs to appear silvery white and leaves to drop off prematurely. Feeding on the leaves starve the plant of vital resources, which reduces the shrubs capacity to produce flowers, new leaves and shoots. Continued feeding damage reduces the aggressive growth rate of shrubs and allows other plants to compete for space.



Adult *Falconia* on lantana leaf



Falconia nymphs (young) on lantana leaf



Damage to lantana leaves caused by *Falconia*



Visual damage to lantana bush (foreground) caused by *Falconia*



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE. PHONE: Weedbuster Toll-free Helpline: 0800 005 376

WEBSITE: PPRI website is located via links from the Agricultural Research Council website: www.arc.agric.za

