Biological Control of Mimosa

APION

Flower Feeding Weevil

January 2018

Apion Adult

Coelocephalapion pigrae is the scientific name of the weevil commonly called apion. It is native to Venezuela and was introduced into the Northern Territory in 1994 after three years of quarantine testing.

Apion weevils are small brown beetles with long snouts. They forage in mimosa buds and flowers and will feed on mimosa leaves when no buds or flowers are present. They are well established as a biocontrol agent in the NT.

Apion impacts on mimosa by damaging the buds and flowers. They prevent the plant from being able to produce as many seeds and therefore reduce the reproductive capacity of mimosa.

When there are no flowers or buds available they will also feed on the leaves of mimosa, which reduces the plant's ability to photosynthesise and reduces its growth and overall health.

Eggs are laid in developing flower buds, hatching after two days. The larvae then feed for six days on the growing bud and flower. Larvae complete their development and pupate just as the flower withers and dies. Pupae remain in the developing seed head and adults emerge after three days. Full development from egg to adult takes 11 days. Females will begin lay eggs after one week, then live up to 11 weeks.

Mimosa impacted by apions

Apion on the stem of a mimosa bud

Apion on a mimosa flower

Apion on a mimosa bud

Apion Adult

For more information contact **Weed Management Branch**

Darwin: 8999 2380 **Katherine:** 8999 2380
Tennant Creek: 8962 4314 **Email:** weedinfo@nt.gov.au
Web : www.nt.gov.au/weeds

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