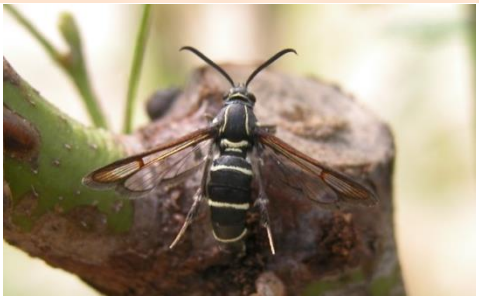
Biological Control of Mimosa

CARMENTA

Stem Boring Moth

January 2018

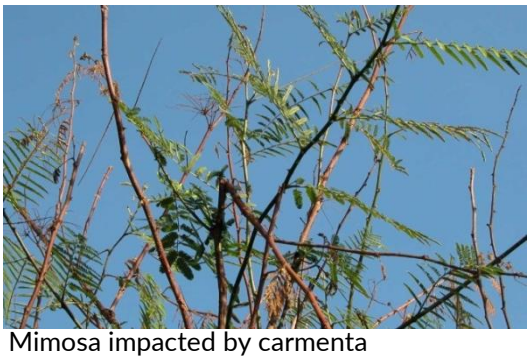


Adult carmenta

Carmenta mimosa is the scientific name of the moth commonly known as carmenta. It is native to Mexico and Central America and was introduced into the Northern Territory in 1989 after two years of quarantine testing.

Carmenta adults are wasp-mimics, which means they look like wasps. They have a black body with cream stripes and their wings are clear with black veins and edges. Adults live for about five days.

Carmenta caterpillars (larvae) tunnel into the stems, branches and trunks of mimosa and feed inside them. This can cause sections or whole branches to die. The damage caused by carmenta reduces seed production and plant vigour, making mimosa more susceptible to diseases and control efforts.



Mimosa impacted by carmenta

Carmenta is having a widespread impact on mimosa plants across the Northern Territory.

Each carmenta female can lay up to 300 eggs, which take about 11 days to hatch. The caterpillars tunnel into the stem and feed for 60 days. Once a caterpillar has finished feeding, it pupates and emerges 11 days later as an adult. It takes about 11 weeks for carmenta to complete its life cycle. You can tell when carmenta is present inside a mimosa stem by the sawdust (frass) on the stem.

Frass (sawdust) from caterpillar activity

Empty pupal case after emergence

Eggs

Caterpillar

Pupae

For more information contact **Weed Management Branch**

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