

Sweetpotato West Indian weevil (119)

Summary

- Widespread distribution. Central and South America, Caribbean, parts of US and Asia. An important pest.
- Adults lay eggs in base of stem ('crown') and in storage roots, and larvae do the damage by making tunnels. Same damage as sweetpotato weevil (*Cylas*).
- Does not fly; crawls from weedy borders.
- Spreads in cuttings and storage roots, same as *Cylas*.
- Cultural control: early, deep rooting varieties; plant only tip cuttings; remove wild morning glory; hill-up, covering cracks during dry times; ideally, make one-time harvest; 3-4-year crop rotation; after harvest, collect and destroy vines and infested storage roots.
- Chemical control: treat vines (bifenthrin); treat plants in field every 3-4 weeks (bifenthrin or fipronil).

Common Name

West Indian sweetpotato weevil

Scientific Name

Euscepes batatae; previously *Euscepes postfasciatus*

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Information from CABI (2014) *Euscepes postfasciatus* (West Indian sweet potato weevil). Invasive Species Compendium (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/23541>); and ¹Reid C (2010) Identification of sweetpotato weevil species in the west Pacific. Australian Museum, Sydney; and Brookes D, et al. (2019) Origins, divergence, and contrasting invasion history of the sweet potato weevil pests *Cylas formicarius* (Coleoptera: Brentidae) and *Euscepes batatae* (Coleoptera: curculionidae) in the Asia-Pacific. Journal of Economic Entomology XX(X): 1-9.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334747037_Origins_Divergence_and_Contrasting_Invasion_History_of_the_Sweet_Potato_Weevil_Pests_Cylas_formicarius_Coleoptera_Brentidae_and_Euscepes_batatae_Coleoptera_Curculionidae_in_the_Asia-Pacific; and from O'Sullivan J et al. (undated) Sweetpotato DiagNotes: A diagnostic key and information tool for sweetpotato problems. (<https://keys.lucidcentral.org/keys/sweetpotato/key/Sweetpotato%20DiagNotes/Media/Html/FrontPage/FrontPage.htm>); Photos 1&2 Gerald McCormack, Cook Islands Biodiversity & Natural Heritage. (<http://cookislands.bishopmuseum.org/>).

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Photo 1. Adult West Indian sweetpotato weevil, *Euscepes postfasciatus*, showing distinctive white patches on the wing case.



Photo 2. Adult West Indian sweetpotato weevil, *Euscepes postfasciatus*, showing typical weevil snout, and part of the distinctive white patch on the wing case. The body is covered in short stiff hairs.

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