

## Whiteshouldered House Moth *Endrosis sarcitrella* (Linnaeus)



### GENERAL INFORMATION

*Endosis sarcitrella* acquired its common name from the distinct white shoulders and prothorax which contrast its dark forewings, making it easily distinguished. While the larva feeds mainly on dried food goods, it will attack clothes and rugs on rare occasions. It is reported to be a greater pest in Europe than in the United States, yet it was widely distributed in California as early as the 1950's. Adult moths can take liquid, but cannot feed. The larva is the stage that causes damage.

### SIGNS OF INFESTATION

The larval stage or caterpillar of this insect will bore into materials like cork, seeds or even rugs, carpeting and on a rare occasion fabrics. Younger, smaller larvae produce smaller feeding damage, while more mature larvae destroy relatively larger quantities of the food materials.

### FOOD SOURCES

The larvae of this widely distributed insect feeds mainly on a wide variety of dried seeds, grains and vegetable matter. Other reported foods are; peas, beans, corn, wheat bran, mixed feeds, seed potatoes, rubbish in bird nests, thatch on roofs, fungi in trees, vegetable debris and moldy residues. It appears to have a preference to filthy and moldy environments as the larvae require a minimum of 80% RH. It is known to do serious damage in wine cellars by boring into corks. It can cross over to feed on rugs, carpets, woolens, other fabrics or even dead insects.

### LIFE CYCLE

The female lays eggs deep in crevices by



### DIAGNOSTIC MORPHOLOGY

#### Adults:

- Distinct white shoulder and prothorax
- Contrasting grayish white forewings
- Forewings are marked with dark patches
- Males: 6.3 mm (1/4 in)
- Females: 10.5 mm (7/16 in)
- 10- 25 mm wingspan
- Hindwings are narrowed toward the tips

#### Immature Stage:

- Larvae are white with brownish head
- Approximately 12 mm (1/2 in) long



extending her ovipositor. Temperature plays an important role in the development of this insect. Eggs will hatch at 10- 29 degrees C. At 10 degrees C it takes the eggs 42 days to hatch, white at 15 degrees C it takes 15 days and at 25degrees C it takes 6 -7 days. Larvae require a minimum of 80% relative humidity. Larvae will mature to adults in 5 - 11 weeks depending on temperature and humidity, although there are reports of larvae living as long as 133 days and the complete cycle from egg to adult lasting 235 days. The pupal stage will generally last 10 - 25 days. The optimum temperature is 24 -26 degrees C. Development will continue throughout the winter in heated environments. This species can have up to 4 generations per year.

### CONTROL & TREATMENT

By modifying temperature and humidity in the area of an infestation, this pest can be controlled. As was stated above, the larvae require a minimum RH of 80%. If the humidity can be lowered to below this level on the micro-environment level where the insect is located, you should see a halt to reproduction. Many of the reports on this insect state that it prefers filthy environments. Standard sanitation and detailed cleaning of artifacts should also help to control this moth.

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## **Fact Sheet: Whiteshouldered House Moth**

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