

A Bug's Life

Fall armyworm

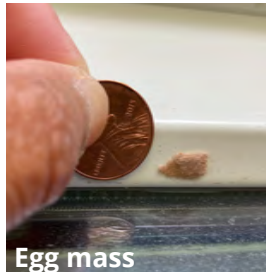
Family: Noctuidae; *Spodoptera frugiperda*

Not-so-fun facts

- Called armyworms because they "march" and damage in large groups
- Favorable conditions: Cool, wet spring seasons followed by warm, humid weather and heavy rainfall
- Overwinter in southern sites in Florida, Texas and Mexico
- Migrate north to midwest in Aug/Sept
- Major damage can occur to home lawns, golf courses, forage pastures and a variety of crops

Identification

Egg: Laid in masses of 100-200, covered in "fluffy" dense scales



Egg mass

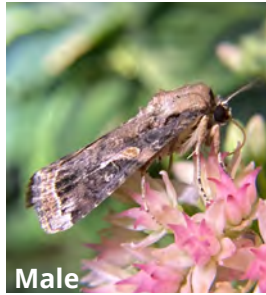


Caterpillar head

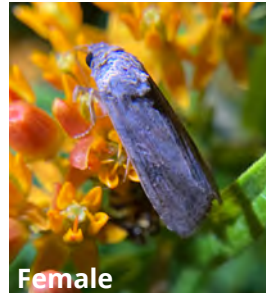
Caterpillar: Undergo 6 stages of development, mature larvae are up to 1-1/4" long

Pupa: Reddish-brown pupal cases in top 3" of soil

Adult: 1-1/2" wingspan, dark gray-brown, mottled moth, males and females look different



Male



Female

Life cycle

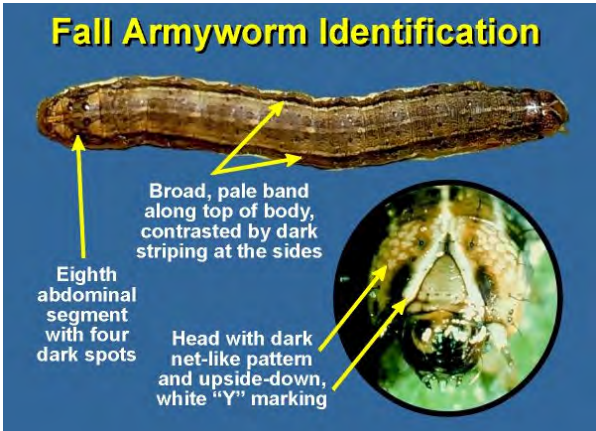
- 3-4 weeks to complete life cycle
- Adults are nocturnal
- Egg masses laid everywhere - on plant material, buildings, outdoor objects
- Caterpillars emerge 2-5 days later



Mature larvae do the most damage

Management

- Scout lawn for signs of pest activity
- Destroy egg masses by hand
- Small caterpillars can be treated with organic products spinosad or *btk*
- Caterpillars <3/4" long can be treated with pyrethroids like bifenthrin, lambda-cyhalothrin or carbaryl
- No effective treatment for mature larvae or pupae
- For areas with extensive damage, plan to re-seed or re-sod
- Chlorantraniliprole treatment in spring protects turf
- Offspring do not survive the winter



Damage can appear in a line with healthy turf on one side and dead turf on the other, line progresses over time