

# A Bug's Life

# Squash vine borer

*Melittia cucurbitae*

## Fun facts

- Active June through August
- Day flying moths feed on flowers
- Eggs laid at base of plant stem
- Larvae emerge and bore into stem
- Overwinter as pupae in soil
- 1 generation per year

## Host plants

- All cucurbits, especially squash, zucchini, pumpkin, gourds, and melon

## Identification

Damage: Wilting or dead leaves and vines, orange sawdust-like frass

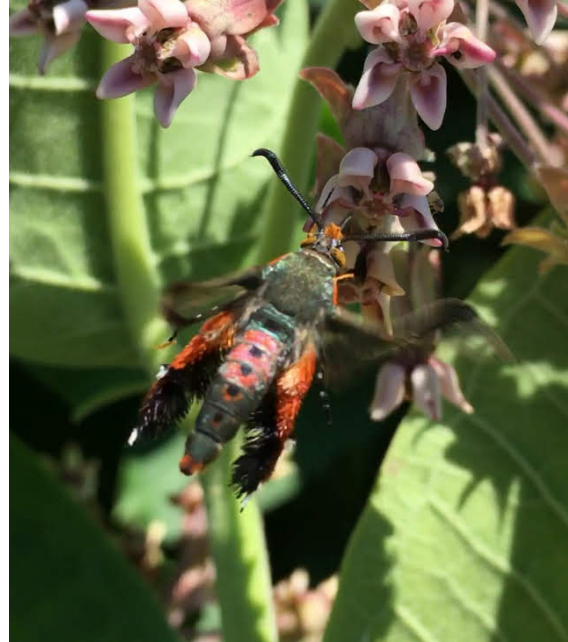
Eggs: Laid singly, flat and brown

Larva: Cream colored with brown heads burrowing in center of stems

Moth: Red abdomen with black dots, forewings are dark, hind wings clear, dangly, colorful legs

## Management

- Trap moths with yellow bowls of water
- Install floating row covers\*
- Rotate location of crops
- Wrap stem with aluminum foil to prevent egg laying
- Spray or dust at base of stems 7-10 day intervals with diatomaceous earth, pyrethrins, spinosad; synthetic options include carbaryl and permethrin



Photos: J. Green

\*Row covers should be removed or pulled back when plants flower to allow for pollination