

MONTANA SMALL GRAIN INSECTS

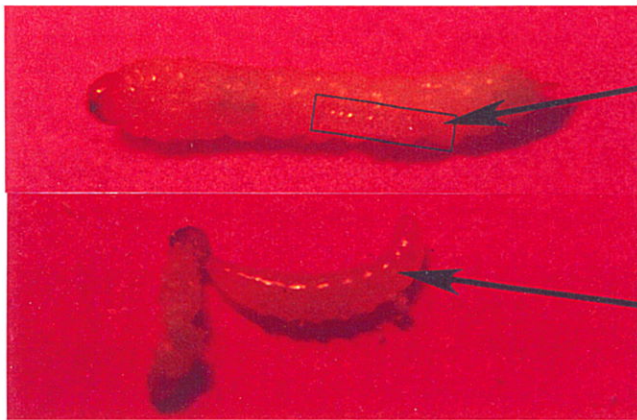
Wheat Stem Sawfly Parasites

Bracon cephi (Gahan) and *Bracon lissogaster* Muesebeck, Hymenoptera: Braconidae

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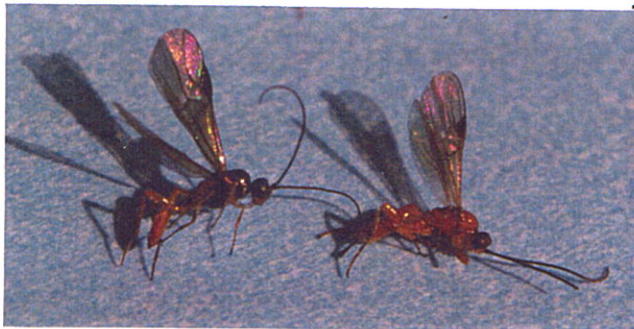
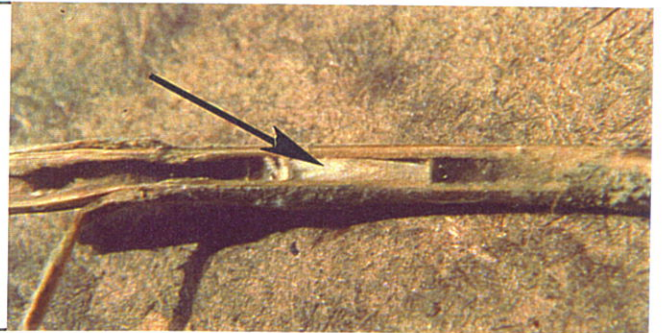
Sawfly parasites are small wasps that attack sawfly larvae in stems. Sawflies are killed before stems are cut. Parasitism levels vary across the state. The importance of parasites in long term sawfly management programs has not been determined.



Young parasite larva- Attached to a partially grown sawfly larva.

Full grown parasite larva- Sawfly larvae are consumed by the parasite larvae.

Cocoons are constructed by mature parasite larvae in stems. Parasites overwinter in the cocoons. Some cocoons are located in upper regions of wheat stems and are picked up by combines during harvest. Others remain in the stubble. Tillage may affect parasite survival. Parasite wasps emerge later than sawfly wasps.



B. lissogaster

B. cephi

Parasite wasps- *Bracon cephi* (right) is currently the most common in Montana. Wasps search for plant stems that contain sawfly larvae and insert eggs into stems near the larvae. The parasite wasps do not attack sawfly larvae after stems are cut. There are two generations of parasites each summer.