

TRADESCANTIA BEETLE COMPARISON

Key Differences

Common Name	Tradescantia Leaf Beetle	Tradescantia Stem Beetle	Tradescantia Tip Beetle
Latin Name	<i>Neolema ogloblini</i>	<i>Lema basicostata</i>	<i>Neolema abbreviata</i>
Status	Released 2011, established.	Released 2012, promising signs of likely establishment seen.	Released 2013, establishment success unknown yet.
Adult	Dark metallic bronze with slight iridescence. 	Shiny black with knobby appearance close-up. 	Wing cases are yellow with black stripes and dots. 
Larva	Young larvae are gregarious and form feeding fronts. Older larvae feed individually. Accumulate moulted skins and excrement as a protective covering. 	Not generally visible as they feed inside the stems. Stem necrosis and collapse, and brown frass may be obvious. 	Not generally visible as they feed inside the tips. Brown frass may be obvious. Only older/ externally feeding larvae develop a protective covering. 
Eggs	White, laid on the lower surfaces or undersides of the leaves, sometimes singly but mostly in clusters of 2-5.	Yellow, laid on the lower surfaces or undersides of the leaves or in leaf axils, mostly singly but sometimes in clusters.	Opaque white, laid on the lower surfaces or undersides of the leaves or in new unfurled leaves, sometimes singly but mostly in clusters of 2-5.

<p>Typical Damage</p>	<p>Adults chew holes around the edges of the leaves, and may consume entire leaves. Main damage is caused by the larvae which graze the epidermal tissue off the leaves, mostly on the undersides, and can skeletonise them.</p> 	<p>Adults chew elongated windows in the upper surfaces of leaves, and may consume entire leaves. Main damage is caused by the larvae which bore into the mature stems causing them to collapse.</p> 	<p>Adults chew elongated windows in the upper surfaces of leaves. May consume entire leaves and occasionally feed on stems. Main damage is caused by the larvae which destroy the growing tips. Larvae also feed on leaves if no tips are available.</p> 
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Similarities

<p>Adults</p>	<p>4–5 mm long, females are usually slightly larger than males. Likely to be fairly long-lived (up to 5 months in captivity).</p>
<p>Larvae</p>	<p>Pale greyish-brown.</p>
<p>Pupae</p>	<p>All have unusual and distinctive white, star-shaped pupal cases which resemble styrofoam in texture and appearance. The pupae will be attached to plant material, and stem beetle pupae are more likely to be found lower down on plants or in leaf litter than the others.</p>
<p>Number of generations</p>	<p>Life cycle can be completed in 6 weeks in warm temperatures, Likely to have 2-3 generations per year in New Zealand.</p>
<p>When to look</p>	<p>During the warmer months. Adults tend to fall off or fly away when disturbed.</p>
<p>Host range</p>	<p>All are highly host-specific and it is extremely unlikely that anything other than tradescantia (<i>Tradescantia fluminensis</i>) will be attacked. It is possible that some other very closely-related ornamental species (such as <i>T. albiflora</i>) may be attacked to a lesser degree.</p>
<p>Dispersal</p>	<p>Adults fly and are likely to be moderately slow at dispersing (1-2 km/year)</p>
<p>Redistribution</p>	<p>Collect with garden leaf vacuum. Shift at least 50 adults in the spring.</p>

See also *Tradescantia leaf beetle*, *Tradescantia stem beetle*, and *Tradescantia tip beetle*.

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