

Oenospila (Thalassodes) *flavifusata* Wlk.
A Geometrid Pest on Eugenia jambolana in South India

by

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Introduction: *Eugenia jambolana* plant is subject to the attack by a number of insect pests. Padmanabha Aiyar (1942) noted three major caterpillar pests namely *Bombetelia delatrix* Guen, *Argyroploce mormopa* Meyrick and *Thalassodes flavifusata* Wlk., doing extensive damage to *Eugenia* in Travancore. Ananthanarayanan and Venugopal (1954) recorded observations on five important pests on this crop including this geometrid for the first time in South India. *Thalassodes flavifusata*, W. is, beautiful geometriad moth and has a wider distribution in India, Sikkim, Ceylon, Java and Borneo. The following is a brief account on its bionomics and control of this interesting insect.

Life History and Habits: The female moth lays its eggs in small groups on the edges of tender leaf-blades. Twenty to thirty eggs may be laid by a single moth. The egg is small, disc-like, circular, greenish and measure 25. m. m. in length (Plate I, Fig. 1). The eggs hatch in 2 to 3 days. The newly hatched caterpillar is brick-red in colour uniformly and measure 4 m. m. in length. The head-shield is slightly swollen with two small projections dorsally. Thoracic legs are directed forward and brownish in colour. The full grown caterpillar is 1½" in length and greenish in colour with short scattered bristle like hairs arising singly. On the dorsal side of the body are three longitudinal lines extending from the mesothorax to the anal segment. The thoracic and abdominal legs are of the same colour as the body (Plate I, Fig. 2). The larval period lasts from 17 to 18 days. It pupates inside the rolled up leaf. Pupa is greenish and cylindrical in shape and measure 5 m. m. in length (Plate I, fig. 3). The pupal period ranges from 7 to 8 days. The total life-cycle of the pest varies from 26 to 29 days.

Alternate host plants: Besides *Euegenia* it is noted as a pest on *Anacardium occidentale*.

Economic Status: The caterpillar is pest of *Euegenia Jambos* and the damage to tender foliage is often very serious. Large number of caterpillars may be found nibbling or disfiguring tender foliage wholly or in parts.

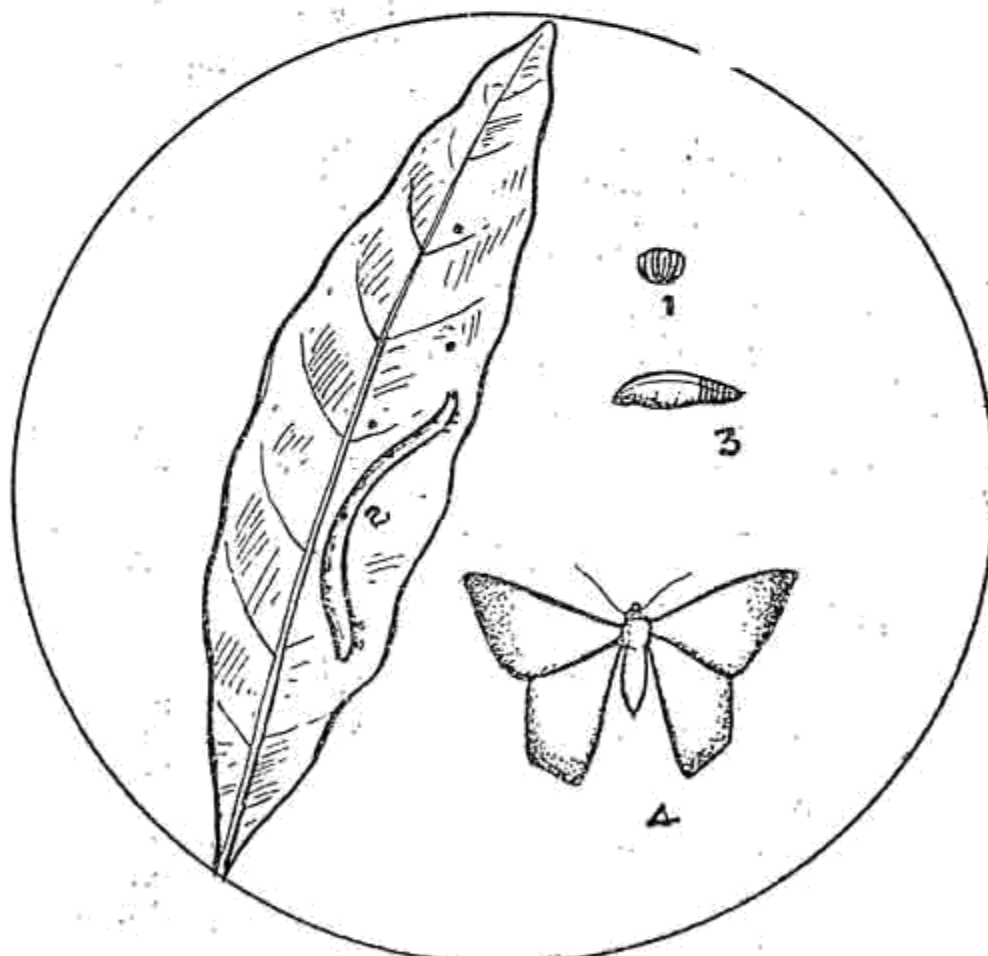
Control measures: The pest can be controlled effectively by the application of BHC (Wettable) spray at a dosage of 1 lb. in 13 gallons of water or dusting 5% BHC to the undersurface of the leaves.

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Life History Stages of *Oenospila flavifusata*



Explanation to the plate: 1. Egg magnified. 2. Caterpillar. 3. Pupa. 4. Adult.