

The Citrus Root Weevil

The citrus root weevil, *Diaprepes abbreviatus*, is a large colorful weevil that is native to the Caribbean Islands. This weevil was accidentally introduced into Florida in the 1960's where it has caused extensive damage. It has been intercepted in shipments of plants to California. This weevil will feed on about 270 different plants including citrus, guava, loquat, holly, and other ornamentals.



An adult citrus root weevil (approximate size $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in length).



Damage and droppings from adult citrus root weevils



Root damaged by citrus root weevil larvae



Citrus root weevil egg mass on a citrus leaf



The grub-like larva of the citrus root weevil

The citrus root weevil damages both the leaves and the roots of plants. The adult weevils damage leaves by chewing semi-circular areas out of the leaf margin. There may also be frass or weevil droppings near the areas that have been fed upon. The grub-like larva feeds upon the roots of a plant weakening or killing a plant.

An adult female weevil lays clusters of eggs in leaves that are folded and glued together. The eggs hatch in 7 – 10 days, and the newly emerged larvae drop to the soil. The larvae enter the soil and feed upon the roots of plants for several months. The larvae then pupate in the soil. After the appropriate amount of time, adults will emerge and the life cycle begins again.

If you see the adult weevils or have damage to plants that looks like that caused by the citrus root weevil, please contact the California Department of Food and Agriculture Exotic Pest Hotline at 1-800-491-1899. Personnel from CDFA can determine if the damage is caused by the citrus root weevil.