

Field Notes
June 14, 2010
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Every year for the past several we have seen an increase in the presence of the injury symptoms shown at right. Fired leaves, usually a single leaf per plant, which can be seen from a distance are a dead give away. Early on we thought we would find a stem borer on the plant, but soon learned it was another insect. So far we have not had to treat for them, but they seem to be on the rise so we will keep looking out for them.



At left is the critter. It has appeared several times in Field Notes. This is just a reminder that they are out there. We started calling it the Black Rice Bug until we were corrected because this is the wrong species. The common name, "Black Rice Bug" has already been assigned to a different insect. So for now we will differentiate between the two by calling this one the Louisiana Black Rice Bug until an official common name is assigned to this species. The Latin name is *Amorochorus dubius*. Apparently when it feeds it must inject a toxin that kills the tissue above the feeding site. Often the leaf is killed on one side of the mid vein.



Every year I wait for the unexpected and every year Mother Nature manages to surprise me with something I have never seen before. The series of photographs on the preceding page are of spider mites in rice. Starting at top left and moving clockwise they are: leaf symptoms, closeup of leaf symptoms, moderately magnified spider mite (circled) and higher magnification of a mature and an immature spider mite. This is my first case of spider mites in rice.

Stuart Gauthier, county agent in Vermilion parish found affected plants on the edge of a field he was checking and brought them to me. I did not know what caused the problem so asked Dr. Groth, plant pathologist to take a look at them. He immediately recognized the plants as identical to plants affected in a greenhouse on the station which had already been diagnosed as being attacked by mites. When we pulled leaves from the plants it was fairly easy to see mites with a hand lens so I knew they were not the panicle rice mite which is much smaller. I sent photographs via e-mail to Dr. Hummel who identified them as spider mites. She said she will need live specimens to get them down to species. I hope they are just an oddity.

Below are two images of another odd problem. Dr. Hummel took these in a field in Madison parish last week. She noticed heavier than usual rice water weevil feeding scars and some scars were not typical. Then she found this beetle (yet to be identified precisely) feeding on rice leaves. I have long thought we had other insects causing feeding injury that resembled rice water weevil feeding especially when could find scars, but not weevils. This observation confirms the suspicions. Probably just another oddity.

I have had reports of both blast and sheath blight on CL261. Both diseases are showing up in a lot of places now. Keep scouting and apply fungicides as needed.

