

# Guava Moth

*(Coscinoptycha improbana)*

## WHAT IS IT?

The guava moth is a native of Australia. It was first found in Kaitaia in 1997. It lays its eggs at the ends of fruit and the caterpillar (larva) hatches out and burrows into the fruit. The larva feeds within the ripening fruit producing frass (excrement) and encouraging the growth of fungus.

## WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

The moth is small, black-and-white and speckled and about a cm long. It is difficult to distinguish from other NZ moths of the same family. The larvae are pink and up to 8 mm long and feed in the ripening fruit (though in loquats, peaches and macadamia nuts it bores into the kernel/nut). When the fruit falls to the ground the fully-grown larva leaves the fruit to pupate in leaf litter and soil debris. It constructs a camouflaged cocoon out of loose bits of stick and leaves about 8 mm long. The adult moth emerges about 14 days later.



Photo: Northern Advocate

*Damage to feijoa by guava moth larva.*



## PEST FACTS

### WHERE AND WHEN IS IT FOUND?

North of, and including, Whangarei City, Mangatapere and Whangarei Heads.

Guava moth infests fruit all year round. Its hosts include yellow guava and feijoa in autumn, citrus (lemon, mandarin, orange, grapefruit) throughout winter/spring, loquats in spring, plums and peaches, nashi pear in summer, and macadamia nuts from summer through early winter.



*Larva.*

Photo: HortResearch

### WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

Remove fallen and rotting fruit and associated leaf litter from beneath trees and bury or burn it. This will destroy pupating guava moths.

Pheromone traps and caps for the guava moth can be purchased from any horticultural supplies store. Male moths are attracted to the pheromone in the trap and become stuck on the sticky bases placed in the trap. Pheromone caps and sticky trap bases can be replenished every 6 weeks. Trapping male moths may help to lower the population by reducing the number of males available to mate with females.



Photo: HortResearch

*Adult moth.*

REGIONAL COUNCIL OFFICES



**WHANGAREI:** 36 Water Street, Private Bag 9021, Whangarei, Phone +64 9 438 4639, Fax +64 9 438 0012

**OPUA:** Unit 10, Industrial Marine Park, Phone +64 9 402 7516, Fax +64 9 402 7510

**DARGAVILLE:** 61B Victoria Street, Phone +64 9 439 3300, Fax +64 9 439 3301

**KAITAIA:** 192 Commerce Street, Phone +64 9 408 6600, Fax +64 9 408 6601