Pest & Crop

Purdue Cooperative Extension Service

August 11, 2006 - Issue 20

In This Issue

Insects, Mites, And Nematodes

Stinging Caterpillars - *(John Obermeyer and Christian Krupke)*

- Two caterpillar species now feeding on field crops can inflict painful stings
- Other caterpillars, such as woollybears and thistle caterpillars, are harmless

Pest managers occasionally observe or FEEL peculiar-looking caterpillars feeding on the leaves of corn and soybean this time of the year. Look carefully before you touch! Two species, the Io caterpillar and the Saddleback caterpillar, found in fields can sting when brushed against! Though both species can be found on many different plants, in field crops the Io feeds on both corn and soybean, while the saddleback is only encountered in corn.

The bodies of these caterpillars are covered with "stinging" or "urticating" hairs, which produce a stinging sensation and temporary rash when the caterpillars come into contact with the skin. These stinging hairs resemble spines; whereas the often encountered and harmless woollybear is just hairy looking. To add confusion to the matter, there are many more formidable looking caterpillars found on various plant species that are harmless. The old adage, when in doubt, leave it alone applies here.

Io caterpillar in corn (**stings**)

Saddleback caterpillar in corn (**stings**)

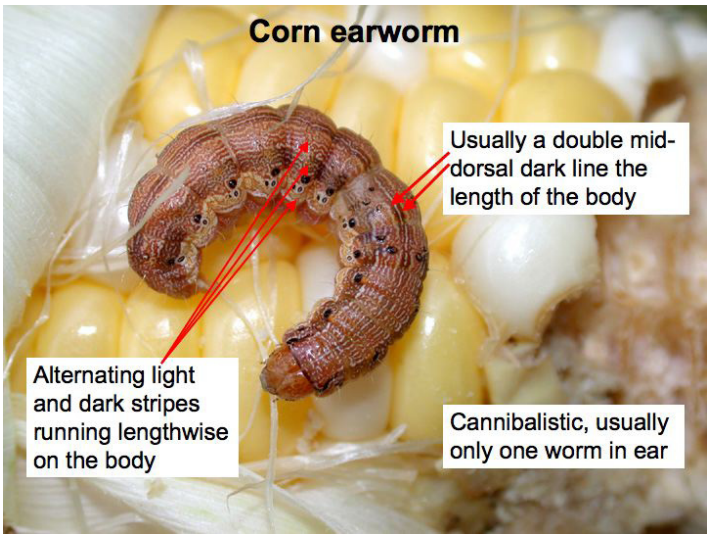
Should you come in contact with one of these caterpillars, most victims experience short-lived pain likened to that of "hot needles" and then temporary reddening of the skin. Happy Scouting!

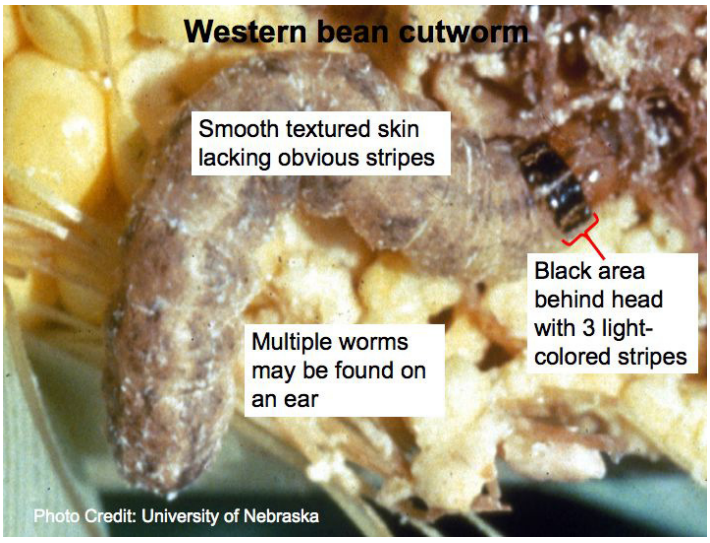
Thistle caterpillar (harmless)

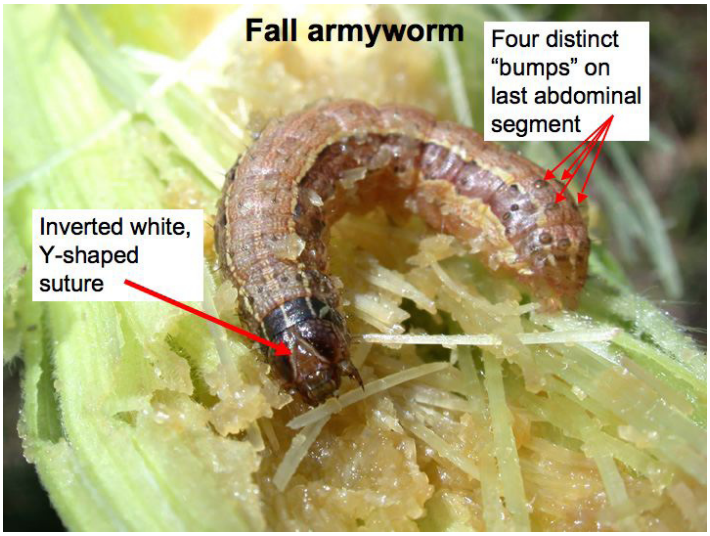
Woollybear caterpillar (harmless)

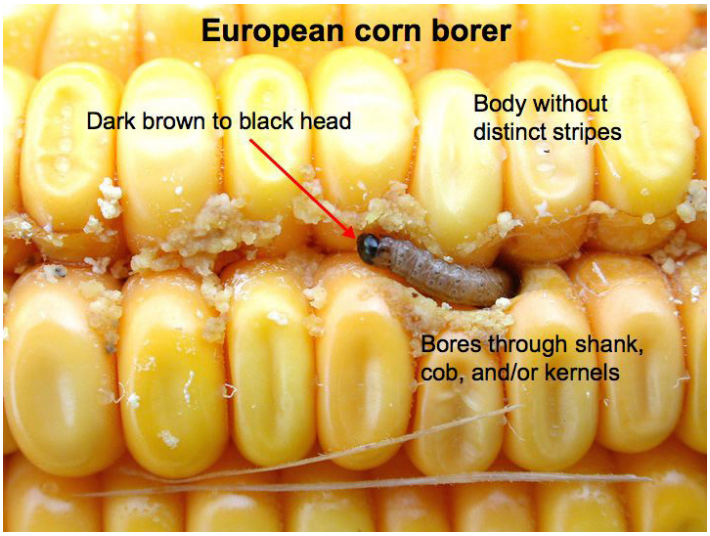
Worms in the Ear - *(John Obermeyer and Christian Krupke)*

Excitement about worms in corn ears seems to be at an all-time high, which isn't saying much. Most likely the trapping of western bean cutworm moths for the first time in Indiana has spurred this "frenzy." Regardless, we welcome anything that will get folks out this time of year to inspect crops. These caterpillars can be very similar in appearance and habits, so identification to species of some of the worms in ears can be tricky. Some identification tips, though not foolproof, appear below for the corn earworm, western bean cutworm, fall armyworm and European corn borer. In general, you cannot use overall body color for identification.









Black Light Trap Catch Report - (*John Obermeyer*)

County/Cooperator	7/25/06 - 7/31/06							8/1/06 - 8/7/06						
	VC	BCW	ECB	SWCB	CEW	FAW	AW	VC	BCW	ECB	SWCB	CEW	FAW	AW
Dubois/SIPAC Ag Center	0	1	2	0	5	0	2	0	2	0	0	24	0	1
Jennings/SEPAC Ag Center	0	0	9	0	0	0	2							
Knox/SWPAC Ag Center	0	0	8	2	16	1	4	0	1	7	1	14	0	2
LaPorte/Pinney Ag Center	0	0	10	0	1	0	10	0	0	122	0	5	0	2
Lawrence/Feldun Ag Center	0	5	2	0	30	0	8	0	5	0	0	35	0	1
Randolph/Davis Ag Center	0	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	1	25	0	2	0	4
Tippecanoe/TPAC Ag Center	0	0	6	0	0	0	17	0	5	319	0	32	0	10
Whitley/NEPAC Ag Center	0	1	8	0	10	0	8	1	0	51	0	8	0	3

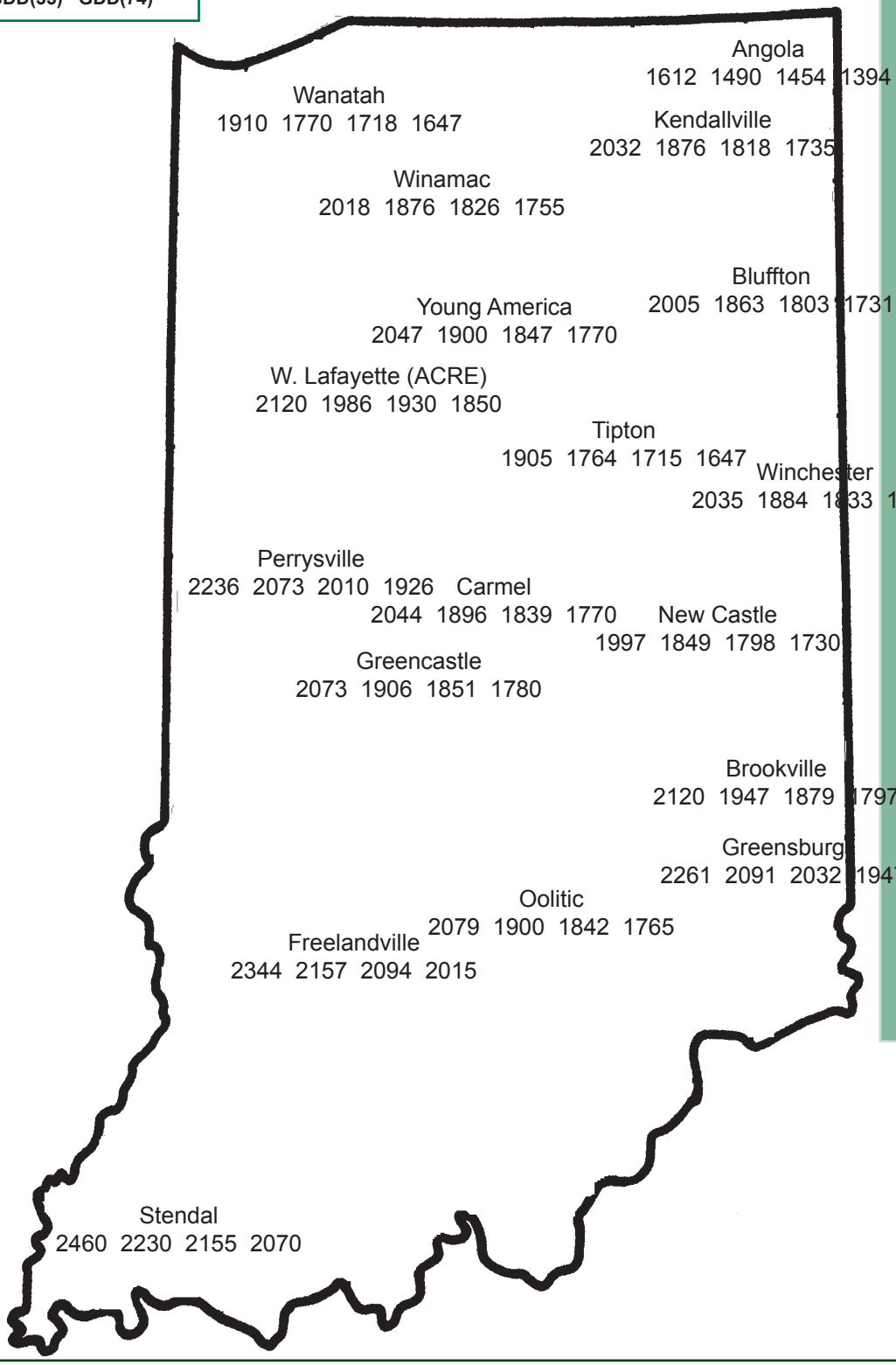
VC = Variegated Cutworm, BCW = Black Cutworm, ECB = European Corn Borer, SWCB = Southwestern Corn Borer, CEW = Corn Earworm, FAW = Fall Armyworm, AW = Armyworm

Weather Update

Temperatures as of August 9, 2006

GDD(2) = Growing Degree Days from April 12 (2% of Indiana's corn planted), for corn growth and development
GDD(10) = Growing Degree Days from April 26 (10% of Indiana's corn planted), for corn growth and development
GDD(33) = Growing Degree Days from May 3 (33% of Indiana's corn planted), for corn growth and development
GDD(74) = Growing Degree Days from May 10 (74% of Indiana's corn planted), for corn growth and development

MAP KEY
Location
GDD(2) GDD(10) GDD(33) GDD(74)



4" Bare Soil Temperatures 8/9/06

Location	Max.	Min.
Wanatah	81	71
Columbia City	79	69
Lafayette	83	73
Farmland	85	71
Butlerville	83	77
Vincennes	88	78