

Erythrina twigborer (*Terastia meticulosalis*)



Larva



Adult

Distribution: *Erythrina* twigborer is spread from Argentina to several southern states of the US (including California).

Field ID: Adults have marbled tan and brown forewings and up to 46 mm wingspan. Spring generation adults are usually larger than adults of summer and fall generations.

Larvae are cream colored and have black heads and prothoracic plates in the early stages of development. The color of prothoracic plate of advance stage larvae turns light brown.

Pupae are brown and are surrounded by fine, loose cocoons.



Hosts and damage:

Erythrina twigborer was recorded on various *Erythrina* species, including *E. caffra*, *E. chiapasana*, *E. coralloides*, *E. crista-galli*, *E. herbacea*, *E. falcata*, *E. fusca*, *E. sandwicensis* and others.

Young larvae of *T. meticulosalis* of summer and fall generations start feeding on the tips of stems severely damaging the upper parts of the plants and producing characteristic dye-offs of the tips. They later burrow deeper inside the stems of their host plants. Larvae of the spring generation commonly enter *Erythrina* pods and feed on seeds.

The pupation occurs mostly on the ground in the leaf litter.

Erythrina plants often are severely affected by larvae of *T. meticulosalis* where majority of host plant's stems are dry and declined.