

SAWTOOTHED GRAIN BEETLE

Coleoptera: Silvanidae

By Eric Day

SIZE: 1/10 to 1/8 inch (2-3mm).

COLOR: Brown.

DESCRIPTION: The adult is a small, active, brown beetle, 2-3mm long, with a flattened body and six saw-toothed projections on each side of the thorax. The larva is yellowish-white, about 2-3mm long, with a brown head. The abdomen tapers toward the tip. The saw-toothed grain beetle (*Oryzaephilus surinamensis*) is a common pest known throughout most of the world. A closely related species, *Oryzaephilus mercator*, is also important and is often mistaken for the sawtoothed grain beetle.

HABITAT: The sawtoothed grain beetle is a common pest in grocery stores, food warehouses, and grain storage.

LIFE CYCLE: The females live from 6 to 10 months and deposit 45 to 285 eggs in foodstuffs. Several generations may occur each year, as the life cycle requires only 3 to 4 weeks during the summer.

TYPE OF DAMAGE: It readily penetrates packaged cereals, dried fruits, and candies. It also attacks flour, meal, sugar, drugs, dried meat, and tobacco.

CONTROL: Controlling this pantry pest requires careful inspection of all cereal foods, discarding the heavily infested material, repackaging material in new containers, and vacuuming kitchen cabinets. Vacuuming the cabinets will be much more beneficial than washing them. Vacuuming will remove flour dust and scraps in the cracks and crevices of the cabinet. Washing may make a paste of the flour.

INTERESTING FACTSHEETS: Adults do not fly and live about 6 to 10 months, with some living up to three years.



Sawtoothed grain beetle.
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