

**B-94: *Melanagromyza hibisci* Spencer: a pest on Okra *Abelmoschus esculentus* (L) Moench**

D Ahangama, K M Somawathie  
(Dept of Agric Biol, Univ of Peradeniya)

*Melanagromyza hibisci* Spencer, Okra petiole maggot, though reported as a serious pest on Okra, *Abelmoschus esculentus* (L.) Moench in India, it is not reported as a pest in Sri Lanka.

An insect species recovered from Okra seedlings grown in Peradeniya, showing symptoms of dropping leaves and galls on stems was identified as *Melanagromyza hibisci* Spencer. Even though the biology of the insect was studied in India, no information was available regarding the location of eggs in plant tissues.

In this study, an attempt was made to locate eggs of Okra petiole maggot using a staining technique developed based on the staining technique proposed by Tewari *et al.* (1988).

Elongated eggs of *M. hibisci*, which were 0.5 - 0.6 mm in length and 0.15 - 0.175 mm in breadth were located in tissues of petioles and stems of Okra seedlings. This staining technique could be used to detect eggs of other leaf or stem mining insects.

It was revealed that *M. hibisci* attacks leaf petioles and stems of Okra seedlings (above 18 days old) and leaf petioles of mature Okra plants causing premature death of leaves.