

Avocado Flower Bugs (*Sphaerocoris annulus ocellatus*)

KALRO E-mimea Plant Clinic

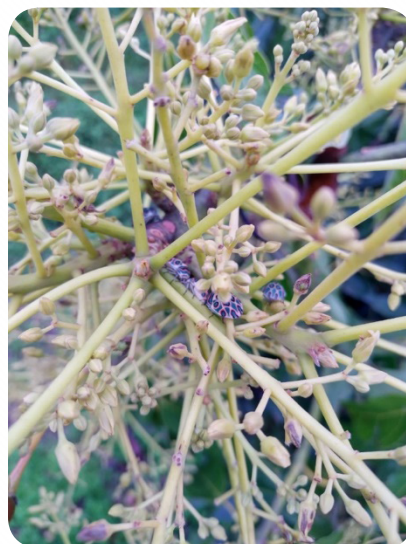
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Other crops:

Citrus, cotton, okra sun flower and ornamentals



Bugs on avocado flowers
Source: Sarah Limo, Farmer



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Pest Name

Flower Beetle


Description

Sphaerocoris annulus, also known as Picasso bug or Zulu hud bug (Zulu: “iCikwa”), is a species of shield-backed bugs of the family Scutelleridae and can grow to a length of about 15 millimetres. This species is present in tropical and subtropical Africa (Benin, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

Diagnosis/Identification

Symptoms

Sphaerocoris annulus appear like beetles but are bugs. They use their piercing mouthparts to suck vital fluids from stems, leaves, and fruits. This feeding action can lead to localized tissue damage where nutrients and water transport are disrupted. The affected areas of the plant may exhibit signs of stress, weakening the overall health and potentially reducing the plant’s ability to photosynthesize, grow, and reproduce.

Conditions prevailing that contribute to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presence of other host plants within avocado orchards - Low soil fertility and insufficient soil water supply
Conditions prevailing that contribute to failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper soil fertility and water management
Management Strategy	<p>The following management options are recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manually pick insects when low infestations occur - Spray with repellants like extracts of onions, garlic, and lantana - Insecticides – spray with Twiga Ace 20% SL, Actara 25 WG, Tata Mida 200 SL or Nimbecidine EC <p>Note: Agrochemicals should be used in consultation with professional practitioners and considering existing cautionary/safety measures, particularly the manufacturer's instructions.</p>
Mandate Centres	<p>More information can be obtained from: ICRI KALRO–NSRC Email: kalro.sericulture@kalro.org Address: P. O. Box 7816-01000, Thika</p> <p>ABIRI KALRO Perkerra Email: director@abiri.org Address: P. O. Box 32-30403, Marigat</p> <p>KALRO Seed Email: info.kalroseeds@kalro.org; info@kalro.org Address: P. O. Box 6223-01000, Thika</p> <p>KALRO-NARL Kabete Email: cd.narl@kalro.org; info@kalro.org Address: P. O. Box 14733-00800, Nairobi</p> <p>Website: www.kalro.org</p>
Geographic Coverage	This pest is found in major avocado producing areas in Kenya
<p>Geographic Coverage The project counties for avocado are Bomet, Bungoma, Embu, Kakamega, Kiambu, Kericho, Kirinyaga, Kisii, Machakos, Meru, Muranga, Nandi, Narok, Nyamira, Nyeri, Uasin Gishu, and Vihiga</p> <p> Counties where pest occurs</p> <p> Counties with no observation</p>	

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References	- van der Heyden, T. (2017): A recent record of <i>Sphaerocoris annulus</i> (FABRICIUS, 1775) in Zambia (Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Scutelleridae). - Heteropteron, 49: 23-25.
Disclaimer: The content of this publication is for general information to avocado farmers and technical staff only and no person should act, or fail to act on the basis of the information herein without professional advice from crop health experts affiliated to Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO).	This factsheet was produced by KALRO as part of commercialization of avocado with support of National Agriculture Value Chain Development Project (NAVCDP)

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