



Fig Beetle Larvae Fact Sheet

The creature

Fig beetles can cause quite severe damage to both ornamental and fruiting Fig trees. The major damage is caused by the larval stage that eat voraciously though leaves causing severe skelotonisation of foliage. The beetle undergoes a complete metamorphosis with the female laying a group of around 50 eggs that hatch and live in a large congregation causing the damage. They continue to feed before heading down the trunk to find the soil into which they burrow and pupate. The adult beetles then emerge after around 2 weeks to continue to eat, then mate and lay eggs. As the adults are good flyers they are capable of spreading large distances and appear in gardens never previously infected.



Young larvae soon after hatching (left) and after a few days eating (right)



Adult beetle still feeding and ready to lay eggs

The control

The easiest method of control is hand removal of eggs if you spot them before hatching. If not a contact dose of something like Spinosad (sold as Success by Yates) will give control. Spinosad is a naturally occurring bacteria that has low toxicity to bees and other natural predators. A contact spray with a synthetic pyrethrum spray will also be effective.