Click beetle (skipjack) - *Agriotes sputator* L.

The beetle is 6-9 mm long, stubby, shiny dark brown. The front edge and back tip of the elytrae may be reddish brown. Its head is convex, with dense dotting. Species identification of click beetles needs some expertize and a binocular microscope, or at least a good hand magnifier.

The beetles, which are captured in the trap

Host plants of the larva include maize, cereals, sunflower, sugarbeet, potatoes, other grasses and also many other plants, i.e. tomatoes. The larvae feed on the roots.

The adult beetle feeds on leaves of grasses, and on flowers by pollen; it can frequently be seen for example on Umbelliferae flowers. The main damage is caused by the larvae, the wireworms, which eats up hatching seeds and roots inside the soil. Damages are variable depending on the plant species attacked and the type of soil. Indicators can be of imperfect hatching of seedlings (maize), damaged hatchlings and roots, yellow colouring of the plant parts above ground.

Pheromone traps should be placed at the soil. Usual beginning of trapping in Hungary is beginning of April.

Selectivity of the CSALOMON® pheromone trap: In tests conducted at several sites in Italy occasionally some specimens of *A. brevis* were captured. They can be told apart from *A. sputator* only by a taxonomical expert.

A CSALOMON® pheromone trap starts slowly to decrease its attractive activity after 6-8 weeks of field exposure (depending on actual weather conditions). After this period it is advisable to exchange the bait to a new one. BE SURE TO USE THE SAME BAIT AS BEFORE IN THE SAME TRAP; mixing baits for different species may hamper activity seriously! Control of wireworms should be based on reliable forecasting.

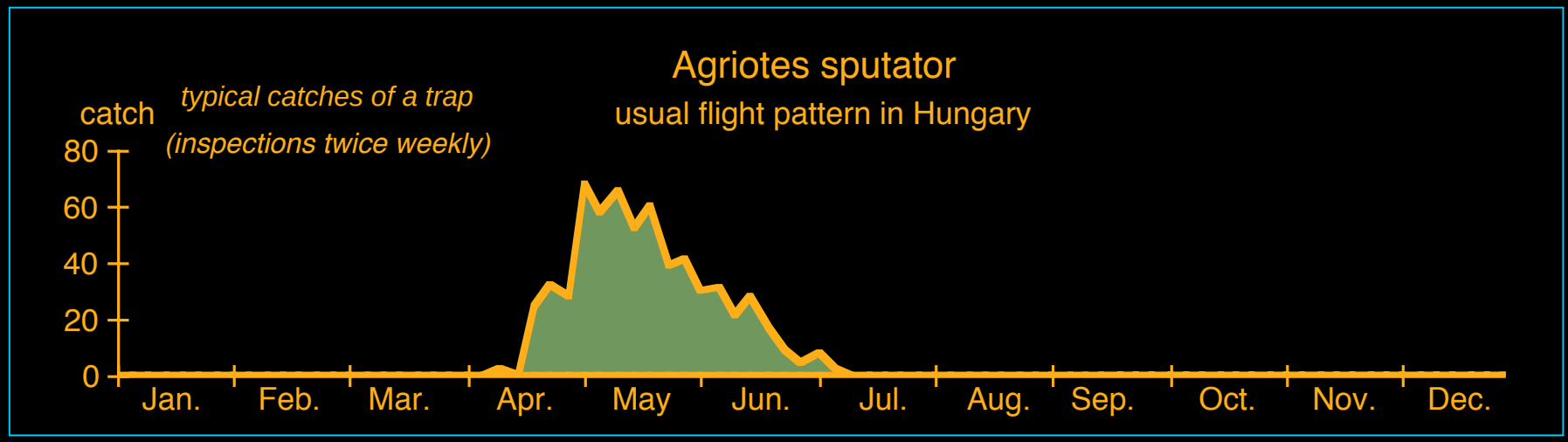
Application of pheromone traps is much easier and simplier that other sampling methods utilized before (i.e. soil sampling, etc.).

The damage of the larva, which should be averted

Pheromone traps detect the occurrence of the pest very sensitively, so that infestation centers can be "mapped" and treated by insecticide easily. The funnel trap types are capable of catching very large numbers of beetles without being saturated.

Detailed measurements for *A. sputator* are not yet available. According to experience in Italy on the closely related *A. ustulatus*, if the average catch per trap does not exceed 150-200 specimens per year, damage is highly improbable on the given field[1]. In case of higher captures, it is advisable to perform larval sampling (soil cores) for more accurate estimation of population levels. This may be performed through agrotechnical means, crop rotation or in more severe cases by soil insecticides[2]. More accurate establishment of correlations between trap captures and larval density in different cultures are underway (Lorenzo Furlan, pers. comm.)

[1] *Furlan, L. és mtsi, ATTI Giorn.Fitopat. 1:133-140, 1996;* [2]*Jermy T, Balázs K. (szerk.) A növényvédelmi állattan kézikönyve. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1990.p*



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or <h2371tot@ella.hu>; internet: <http://www.julia-nki.hu/traps/>.

Photo: Nagy Z. L.

So it looks when caught in the CSALOMON® Yf trap!

Click beetles caught in traps with *A. sputator* bait (1998-2004)

(after Tóth & Furlan, 2005, IOBC/wprs Bull., 28:133-142; Furlan & Tóth, 2007, IOBC/wprs Bull., 30:19-25)