

Pest Profile



Photo credit: North Central Branch-Entomological Society of America, UNL-Entomology Extension

Common Name: Corn flea beetle

Scientific Name: *Chaetocnema pulicaria*

Order and Family: Coleoptera, Chrysomelidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	~0.35	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• white• have a pointy end• darken slightly in color before hatching
Larva/Nymph	< 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• white• slimly shaped• cylindrical• prothorax and last abdominal segment are slightly darkened
Adult	< 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• small• shiny black• enlarged hind legs
Pupa (if applicable)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• white• soft in texture• gets dark before development is complete

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Chewing mouthparts

Host plant/s: Corn is the preferred host plant, but they are also found on a number of different grass types, oats, Timothy, barley and wheat.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): The adult corn flea beetle injures corn plants by removing leaf tissue and by transmitting pathogenic bacteria. Injury by the adults appears as scratches in the upper and lower surfaces of the leaf, usually parallel to the veins. They feed on both the upper and the lower epidermis of corn leaves, but they do not chew completely through the leaves. The scratches rarely result in economy injury. The leaves of severely injured plants appear whitish or silvery. More importantly, the beetles transmit the bacterium *Erwinia stewartia*, the casual organism of Stewart's wilt, to susceptible varieties of corn. Field corn infested with Stewart's disease will show little sign of disease until late in the summer when numerous leaf lesions will appear on the leaves. The result is often small ears or no ears at all.

Reference:

Cook, K. A and R. Weinzierl. (2004) Corn Flea Beetle (*Chaetocnema pulicaria* Melsheimer). Integrated Pest Management Insect Fact Sheet. University of Illinois. Retrieved from http://ipm.illinois.edu/fieldcrops/insects/corn_flea_beetle.pdf

Ratcliffe, S.T, M.E. Gray and K.L. Steiffey. (2010) Corn Flea Beetle, *Chaetocnema pulicaria*. IPM Integrated Pest Management. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Retrieved from http://ipm.uiuc.edu/insects/corn_flea_beetle_old/