

Pest Profile



Photo credit: Janiskay, Florida. Dereila Nature Inn, <http://www.dereilanatureinn.ca>.

Common Name: Oleander caterpillar, polka-dot wasp moth.

Scientific Name: *Syntomeida epilais*

Order and Family: Lepidoptera; Erebidae

Size and Appearance:

| | Adult | Egg | Larva/Nymph | Pupae (if applicable) |
|-------------|--|--|--|---|
| Length (mm) | ~43mm | ~1-2mm | ~37mm | |
| Appearance | -Wasp-like -Blue-black metallic base color with white spots -Abdomen has a red tip | -Small -Light-green in color -Laid in clusters | -Bright orange -Long tufts of black hairs | -Bright orange -Some blackish and red-orange accents |

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Caterpillars: chewing; Moths: siphoning.

Host plant/s: Oleander, Desert rose, Devil's potato and some other Dogbane family members are the main food source for larvae. Moths feed on nectar of the Asteraceae family.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Larva can cause severe defoliation that may result in lessening of plant health. Moths pose no threats to the plants they feed upon.

References:

Chin-Lee, A. (2004, September 1). *Species Syntomeida epilais - Oleander Moth - Hodges#8284*. Retrieved from <http://bugguide.net/node/view/6488>.