

Pest Profile



Photo credit: P. Babin, Bugguide.net

Common Name: Tawny Mole Cricket

Scientific Name: *Neoscapteriscus vicinus* Scudder

Order and Family: Orthoptera, Gryllotalpidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	Length 3.9 mm x 2.8 mm in width.	Oval to bean shaped. Coloration varies from gray to brown. Eggs deposited in clusters of 25-60 eggs. Eggs hatch in 10-40 days.
Larva/Nymph	Newly hatched nymphs are 6 mm long, growing larger with each molt to the adult size.	Newly hatched nymphs are white at first and darken within 24 hours. Young nymphs are wingless. Nymphs resemble the adults. 8-10 instar stages or molts.

Adult	Length 30-34 mm x 8-10 mm wide	Front legs resemble vertebrate moles. Tan to golden-brown with a mottled pattern coloration on the pronotum. Broad prothorax and more robust than other species. The digging claws on the front legs (tibial dactyls) are separated by a space narrower than their width and the space is "V" shaped. Moderately long forewings with long hind wings. Used for the mating season. The forewings on the males have a harp-shaped resonating cell at the base for sound production of a loud nasal trill. One generation per year.
Pupa	N/A	N/A

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Both nymphs and adults have chewing mouthparts to girdle stems, roots and chew foliage.

Host plants: St. Augustine grass, Bermuda grass, Bahia grass and Centipede grass. Sometimes they feed on Zoysia grass.

Description of Damage (nymph and adults): Of the four mole cricket species found in the United States, the Tawny mole cricket is the most damaging. The Tawny mole cricket prefers to feed on the roots of turf grasses through tunnels just below the surface. They eat the roots of grasses and cause them to dry out. The grass will appear uprooted above the tunnel, leaving little trails of dead turf. Heavily infested areas will leave bare patches of soil that will coalesce as the population spreads. The Tawny mole cricket is known to produce its characteristic "Y" shaped tunnels, which can be seen on the soil surface. They feed between the "Y" arms, which allows them two routes of escape. Tawny mole crickets are night feeders. They will leave their burrows during the night to bite off stems and leaves and drag them into the burrows to be eaten. Both nymphs and adults eat the same plants.

References:

Capinera, J.L. and Leppla, N.C. (2013). Shortwinged mole cricket, Southern mole cricket and Tawny mole cricket, Pub. No. EENY-235., University of Florida, Retrieved May 15, 2016 from http://entnemdept.ifas.ufl.edu/creatures/orn/turf/pest_mole_crickets.htm

Potter, D. A. (1998). *Destructive turfgrass insects: biology, diagnosis, and control*. John Wiley & Sons.

Villani, M.G. and Brandenburg, R.L. (2001). An inside look at mole cricket management. United States Golf Association Green Section Record, Vol. 39, No. 5. Retrieved May 15, 2016 from <http://gsrpdf.lib.msu.edu/ticpdf.py?file=/2000s/2001/0109CV.pdf>

Watschke, T. L., Dernoeden, P. H., & Shetlar, D. J. (2013). *Managing turfgrass pests*. CRC Press.