

Pest Profile



Photo credit: [Joseph Berger](#), Bugwood.org

Common Name: Pillbug

Synonyms: Sowbug, roly polly, doodlebug, wood bug, leg pebbles, woodlouse

Scientific Name: *Armadillidium sp.*

Order and Family: Isopoda: Armadillidiidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg		Tiny and white. Kept under female's body in a "marsupium" (water-filled sac). Eggs hatch and stay inside the pouch for a few weeks and then disperse.
Larva/Nymph	Varies over 5+ molts	Smaller version of adults, development to adulthood takes 2 years.
Adult	6-12mm	Dark grey/black, oval shaped, armored segmented appearance, seven pairs of short and jointed legs, two short antennae. Though the terms "pillbug" and "sowbug" are often used interchangeably, "pillbug" correctly refers to the species that roll up into a tight ball, "sowbug" describes the species that are physically incapable of rolling into a ball.
Pupa (if applicable)		

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

Host plant/s: Decaying organic material, young seedlings in rare cases, typically inhabit moist areas.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Both juvenile and adult pillbugs are detritivores and are not major nuisance pests, as they mostly feed on decaying material. Pillbugs and sowbugs breathe through gills on the underside of their bodies which must be kept wet, attracting them to damp habitats. They will occasionally feed on living plant tissues within and near the soil. This includes roots, seedlings, and lower leaves. They will also occasionally feed on the fruits from plants as well as vegetables in gardens laying on the soil.

References:

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