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BIOLOGY, HOST RANGE AND DAMAGE OF CORN STEM BORER IN KHUZESTAN

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Summary

In Khuzestan the dominant species of corn stem borer is *Sesamia nonagrioides botanephaga* T.&B. Its host plants included maize, sugar cane, wheat, sorghom, sudan grass, rice and some wild grasses. Our investigation showed that *S. nonagrioides* attacked to all plant parts of maize except the roots. It overwintered as fully grown larvae at the stem bases and in stubbles of maize in the field. They remained as resting until early spring, then turned to pupae late in March. Adult moths were emerged late in March and mated females initiated to lay eggs in early April.

Eggs were deposited in small batches at the base of leaf blades and leaf sheaths. The incubation period of eggs last 4-8 days. Larval feeding damage on the heart of the young plants caused the symptoms of dead heart on them. Fully grown larvae pupated at the end of their feeding sites.

S. nonagrioides produced 4 generations during the active seasons from late March to early December. A partially fifth generation was also produced on second planting of maize and on stubbles from mid - November to late February.

In Khuzestan, the first planting of maize tolerated damages of 1-1.5 generations of *S.nonagrioides*, whereas the second plantings were damaged by 2-2.5 generations of the pest.

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