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Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries



Bruchids



Adults cowpea bruchids are small (3 mm long) orange-brown beetles with a tear-shaped body, tapering towards the head. Bruchids do not have the elongated snout of true weevils, which infest cereal grains. Bruchids are primary pests of pulses and do not infest cereal grains. They appear to be a pest only in warmer areas of Australia. In stored pulse grains, bruchids leave perfectly round holes where they emerge from the grains.

The cowpea bruchid (*Callosobruchus maculatus*, pictured), have historically been worse in Central Queensland, but have recently spread to southern Queensland and northern NSW. Although this is the species responsible for most infestations in mungbeans, cowpea bruchids also attack chickpea, cowpea, field pea and soybean. Cowpea bruchids continue to breed in stored pulses at grain temperatures over 20°C. Eggs can readily be seen glued to the outside of pulse grains. Life cycle can be as short as 28 days at 30°C.

The bruchid pea weevil (*Bruchus pisorum*) is common in Southern Australia in field peas and faba beans. It does not develop in storage.

Survival rate of immature stages of bruchids in storage is very high, usually higher than 90%.

All bruchids are subject to the nil tolerance standard for live insects in exported grain. Phosphine fumigation is the only approved treatment for bruchids, but phosphine is likely to be effective for market purposes only if applied strictly according to label. (see p.11 of [Insect control in stored grain](#))