

Literature on Black Cutworm:

Females deposit eggs singly or in groups in areas traditionally overgrown with grasses or winter annual weeds. Weeds that are attractive to egg-laying moths include chickweed, shepherd's purse, peppergrass, and mustards such as yellow rocket.

Management options: Monitoring for cutworms is important for management. A soap solution (1/2 ounce of liquid dish soap per 3 gallons of water) applied as a drench to the green during the day will flush the caterpillars from their burrows. If three to eight cutworms per square yard are found, a pesticide application may be needed. A 20-foot border around the green should also be treated because most of the cutworms found on the green come from the surrounding turf. Daily mowing of greens removes 75 to 97 percent of the cutworm eggs before they hatch, but up to 90 percent of the eggs removed by the greens mower can survive and hatch and grass clippings. Therefore, the clippings must be disposed of 100 yards or more from the green because cutworms may crawl long distances (up to 30 feet per night). Also, mowing early (before 5:30 AM) one morning each week will destroy most cutworm larvae before they can return to their burrows. Regular sampling for cutworms and damage, followed by insecticide treatment, if needed, will protect turf grass against significant damage by black cutworms.

