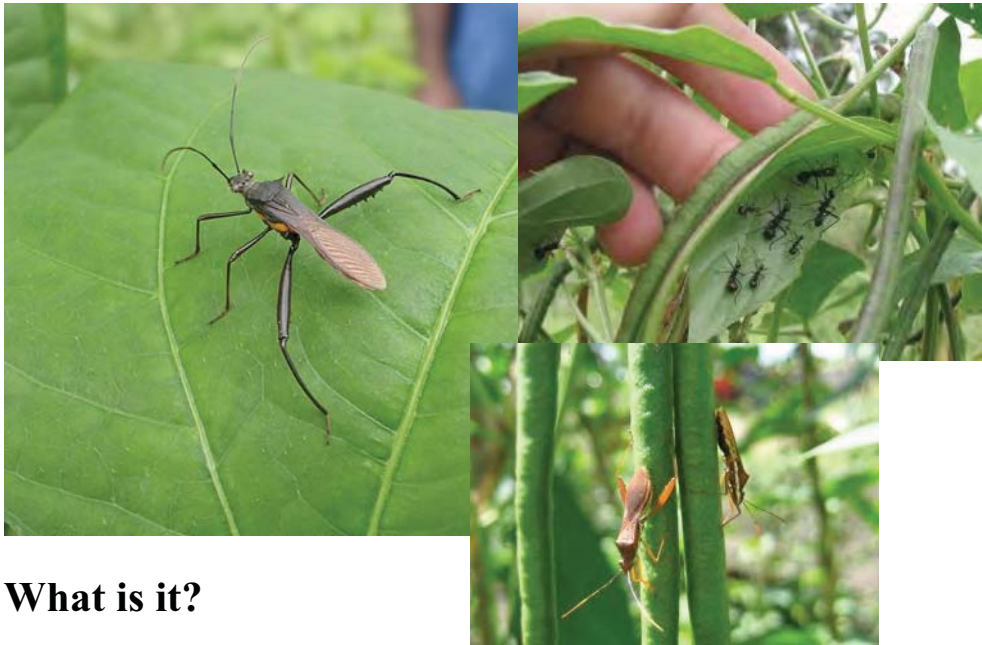


Farmer Fact Sheet 18: Bean Pod Sucking Bug



What is it?

It is an insect that feeds on beans, such as long beans, soybeans and mung bean. It has a long, needle-like, mouth. It uses this to suck juices from stems, pods and seeds. The scientific name is *Riptortus*.

What damage does it do?

The adults and young - they look like ants (photo, top right) – have long thin mouthparts. As they feed, the pods turn brown, dry up and die. Damage can be severe.

How do I identify it?

Look for the adults with their long thin mouthparts and long legs (photos, left & lower right, above); look under the leaves for the ant-like young. Look closely for small holes and damaged, shrivelled pods.



How do I manage the bug?

Cultural control:

- Plant long beans near *Bixa* (photo, right) as a ‘trap’ crop; a method discovered by a farmer on Malaita. *Bixa* is known as the Lipstick Tree; it has red seeds, used by children to paint their faces. When the fruits open, they attract large numbers of *Riptortus*. The insects are attracted to the *Bixa* seeds, leaving the long beans alone.

Chemical control:

- Insecticides have not been tested against *Riptortus* in Solomon Islands. However, it is likely that synthetic pyrethroids, such as lambda cyhalothrin or permethrin, would be effective. See your MAL extension officer for details.