



# PLUM CURCULIO



Plum Curculio (*Conotrachelus nenuphar*) impacts fruits such as apples, plums, apricots, peaches, cherries and other pome and orchard stone fruits. The small weevil or snout beetle, inflicts damage at every stage of its life cycle. Adult weevils leave characteristic crescent-shaped scars on the fruit's surface as they puncture it to feed and lay eggs. Upon hatching, the larvae tunnel into the fruit, causing the fruit to drop and for the larvae to overwinter in the soil. Plum Curculio has been reported as an increasing pest of concern and leading cause of crop damage at POP orchards.

| Month     | Tasks   | Observations & Dates Completed |
|-----------|---|--------------------------------|
| Feb - Mar | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remove and destroy any remaining fruit "mummies" on tree or on orchard floor to reduce sites for overwintering.</li> <li>2. Using a garden tool such as a hoe, cultivate soil under tree up to 4 inches to expose larva to sun, birds, and other predators. If available, bring chickens or ducks through the area to prey on larva.</li> <li>3. Spray <a href="#">beneficial nematodes</a> under affected trees to feed on overwintering larva.</li> </ol>   |                                |
| Apr       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plum curculio emerge from overwintering site and begin feeding on leaves, flowers and mating. Plum curculio begin laying eggs between shuck split and shuck fall. Eggs hatch within days and larvae feeds within fruit for the next 2-3 weeks.</li> <li>2. Apply Kaolin clay (Surround) to protect vulnerable trees. For severe infestations, mix <a href="#">Pyganic</a> and either <a href="#">Grandevo</a> or <a href="#">Venerate</a> into the tank with the Surround. Spray at tight cluster and pink bud (about 7-10 days apart). <b>Do not apply during full bloom!</b></li> </ol> <p>Pyrethrin sprays are organic pesticides containing chemicals taken from chrysanthemum flowers that can be effective at killing certain orchard pests. NOTE: While they are less toxic than chemical pesticides, they should be used with caution and only when non-chemical controls have not been effective. Learn more about <a href="#">pyrethrin sprays</a> on the POP blog!</p> |                                |



| Month            | Tasks   | Observations & Dates Completed |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>May - Jun</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As fruitlets form and grow, thin clusters to allow for sunlight, airflow and healthier fruit. Thinning also helps reduce the spread of disease and insects injuring fruit by feeding and laying eggs within clusters.</li> <li>Continue kaolin clay applications at petal fall and again 7-10 days later.</li> </ol>   |                                |
| <b>Jul - Oct</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As fruit develops, be on the lookout for crescent-shaped scars on fruit. These markings are an indication that eggs have been laid in the fruit. Eggs laid on pome fruit don't usually hatch, only leave superficial scar. Eggs laid on stone fruit do significant damage, so remove and dispose of immediately. Practice consistent orchard sanitation every other day by picking up any dropped fruit on the orchard floor to avoid second generation larvae tunneling into the ground and re-emerging in July and August. This is a great time to collaborate with avian allies such as chickens and/or ducks! Timed orchard hours for avian allies can help with managing fallen fruit and larvae.</li> <li>Second generation will continue emerging through October. Continue practice of picking up dropped fruit and removing scarred stone fruit.</li> </ol> |                                |
| <b>Nov</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spray beneficial nematodes to help manage larvae in the soil.</li> </ul>   |                                |

**Resources Used:**

[Monthly Orchard Task List](#) — [Plum Curculio: A Pome and Stone Fruit Pest](#) — [Kaolin Clay Sprays for Fruit Trees](#) — [Pyrethrin Orchard Sprays](#) — [Controlling Plum Curculio \(The Natural Gardener\)](#)