

Eucalyptus Snout Beetle

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About Eucalyptus Snout Beetle

- It is a leaf-feeding beetle that is a major defoliator of eucalypts.
- It is also known as eucalyptus weevil.
- The pest is indigenous to Australia but occurs in many countries throughout the world where eucalypts are grown.
- The beetle feeds on leaves, buds and shoots, resulting in stunted growth and defoliation and causing heavy losses.
- It can cause damage over vast areas as it has a great flight capability and gets transferred with transport of forest products.
- The pest is mainly controlled with the help of microwasps *Anaphes* spp — an expensive solution.
- This led a team of scientists to look for naturally occurring pathogenic fungi to tackle the problem.

New research

- The scientists collected the fungi from naturally infected beetles, the pathogen can better adapt to the environmental conditions, making it efficient to control beetles in forest populations.
 - The findings of the study showed that *Beauveria bassiana* was highly effective both by contact and ingestion, with a mortality rate of 100 per cent.
 - The fungi could be used to develop a bio-pesticide for sustainable forestry using integrated pest management.
 - The fungi could also be used in other countries where the insect is causing severe damage.
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Q1) What are Fungi?

They can be single celled or very complex multicellular organisms. They are found in just about any habitat but most live on the land, mainly in soil or on plant material rather than in sea or fresh water. A group called the decomposers grow in the soil or on dead plant matter where they play an important role in the cycling of carbon and other elements.

Source: [Scientists characterise a natural pathogenic fungi to help save eucalyptus forests from devastating pest](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/eucalyptus-snout-beetle/>

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