Caterpillar identification – taking photos that show key characteristics

Identification of small larvae is very difficult, particularly without considerable magnification. It is very likely that young larvae will require specimens to be provided rather than just images.

Macro (close-up) lens capability is required for photographs (clip on macro lens for a phone; SLR with macro capabilities; or USB microscope camera). Images must be (i) in focus and (ii) high enough resolution that features used for identification can be clearly seen when zoomed in.

Check the image for clarity before sending on for identification.

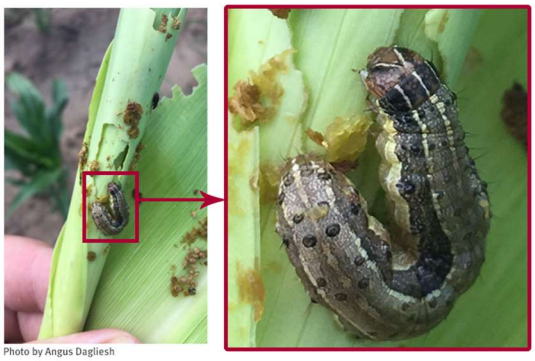

Photo by Angus Dagliesh

Features need to be seen clearly when the image is zoomed

Pictures that are out of focus or grainy when zoomed are not suitable

Photographs submitted for insect identification must clearly show the features used to distinguish between species. A set of the following images/orientations is the bare minimum required for identification from photographs:

1. Directly overhead, whole larva still and flat
2. Side on, close ups of head and rear end
3. Behind and slightly above

Whole body
(from directly overhead)

Photo by Angus Dagliesh

Close-ups* of front and back ends

Head (side view)

Rear end (side view)

Rear end (from behind)

*close-up images taken with a phone and clip-on macro lens.

Photos by Melina Miles