


Buzura suppressaria **(Guenée),**

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Buzura suppressaria (Guenée), commonly known as the tea looper or giant looper, is a major lepidopteran defoliator of tea plants (*Camellia sinensis*) in India and other Asian countries. It causes significant economic damage to tea crops by feeding on leaves, resulting in up to 11–55% crop loss

Morphology

The morphological features of *B. suppressaria* vary across its life stages:

- **Egg:** Small (0.4–0.7 mm), bluish-green in color, and laid in clusters within bark crevices. [1]






Larva (Caterpillar): Fully grown larvae are large and robust, measuring 6.25–7.5 cm in length. They exhibit a "looper" habit, with a rough, warty appearance, and their color ranges from green to dark brown, resembling twigs. They have eight pairs of red-edged, black spiracles and a triangular head.



Pupa: Formed on the soil surface, the pupa is brownish-black, smooth, and glossy, measuring 1.87–2.5 cm long. It is characterized by a pair of anterior ridges and a posterior cremaster-like process.




Adult Moth: Adults are generally greyish-white with fine black specks (irrorations). They have a wing span of 6.25–7.5 cm (females often larger than males). Males have bipectinate (comb-like) antennae.




Life Cycle and Development

The total life cycle, from egg to adult, takes approximately 51–63 days, depending on environmental conditions and host quality. The insect typically completes 3–4 generations in a year



Egg Stage: Eggs are laid in clusters on the underside of leaves or in bark crevices. Incubation lasts about 3–4 days (some studies report up to 8–9 days in different conditions).

Larval Stage: The larval stage is the most destructive, lasting about 34–38 days. The larvae pass through five to six instars (shedding their skin) as they grow, transitioning from brown in early stages to green or brownish in later stages.



Prepupal Stage: Before pupation, the mature caterpillar enters a prepupal stage lasting 2–4 days. [1]

Pupal Stage: Pupation occurs in the soil, with a duration of 10–14 days. [1, 2, 3]

Adult Stage: Adult moths emerge, with females living 6–7 days and males



- **Ecology and Management**

- **Host Plants:** Primarily found on tea, but also feeds on mango, guava, litchi, and other woody plants.

- **Defoliation:** Larvae feed on tea leaves, causing severe defoliation. Early instars damage young leaves, while older larvae can consume whole leaves.

References:

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