

Discover the Fauna of Our Campus

Wheat thrips (*Haplothrips tritici*)

Order: Thysanoptera (thrips)

Family: Phlaeothripidae

Genus: Haplothrips

Species: *Haplothrips tritici*



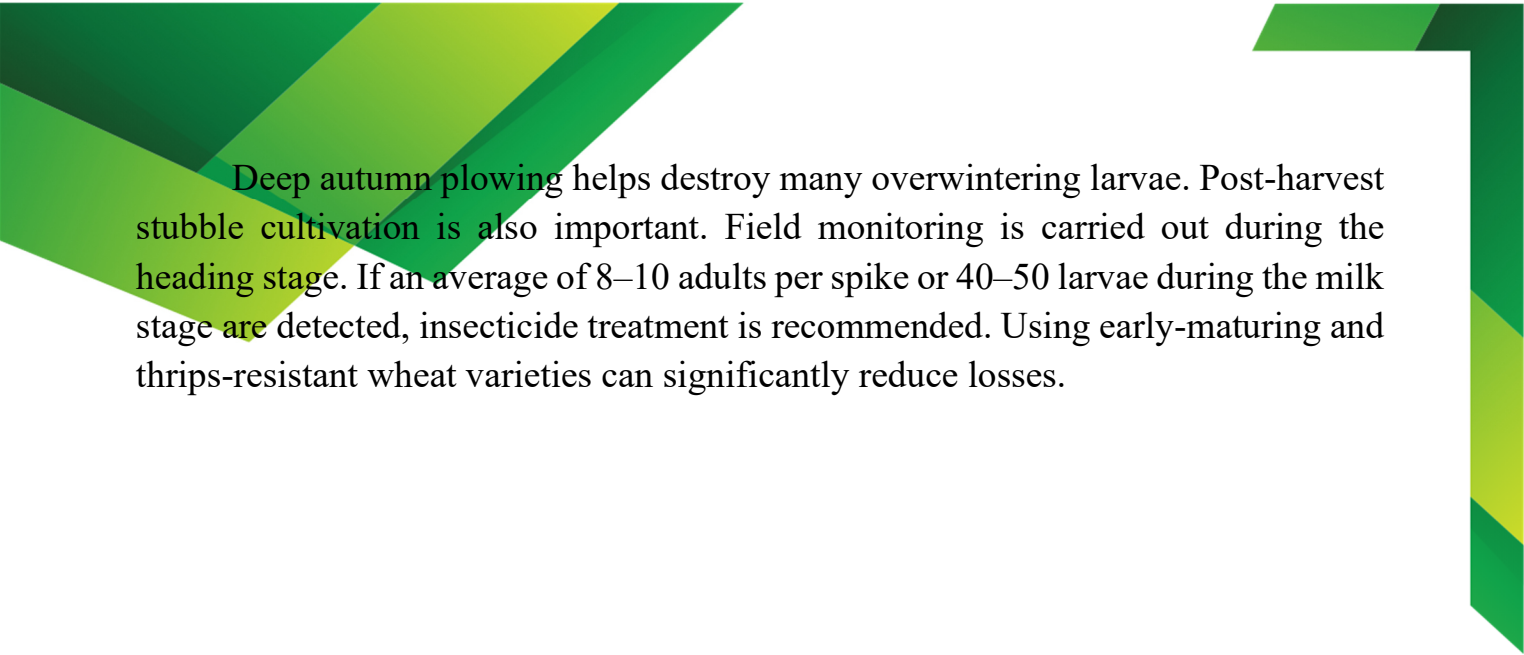
Wheat thrips (*Haplothrips tritici*) is one of the most widespread and harmful pests of cereal crops, especially wheat. It reduces both the quantity (grain weight) and quality (processing and baking properties) of the harvest.

Adults are very small insects, about 1.2–1.5 mm long, with an elongated body that is dark brown to black. Their wings have fringed edges made of fine hairs, which help them glide in the air. Unlike adults, larvae are bright red in color and can be seen moving on wheat spikes. The species produces only one generation per year.

The larvae overwinter in the upper soil layer (10–20 cm) or under crop residues. In spring (April–May), they pupate, and adults emerge and begin flying.

Their mass flight coincides with the wheat heading stage.

The pest feeds by sucking plant sap. Adults enter the spikelets even before they fully emerge from the leaf sheath. As a result, the upper parts of the spike turn white, become deformed, and often fail to produce grains (“sterility”). Larvae feed during the milk stage of the grain, sucking sap from inside the spikelets. This leads to shriveled, lightweight grains with reduced flour quality and poor baking properties.



Deep autumn plowing helps destroy many overwintering larvae. Post-harvest stubble cultivation is also important. Field monitoring is carried out during the heading stage. If an average of 8–10 adults per spike or 40–50 larvae during the milk stage are detected, insecticide treatment is recommended. Using early-maturing and thrips-resistant wheat varieties can significantly reduce losses.

