

# Cutworm Population Monitoring Update

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Lauren Shreading

This fall we participated in statewide monitoring to estimate cutworm moth abundance. Last spring cutworm larvae damaged numerous planted seedlings. Moth capture rates will help us predict the potential for another large and damaging larvae population spike next spring.



We used species-specific pheromone traps to capture army and pale western cutworm moths. The photo shows a pheromone-baited trap containing captured moths. Traps were deployed in two locations near the Orchard House and the North Pivot. We counted captured moths weekly from August to the end of October.

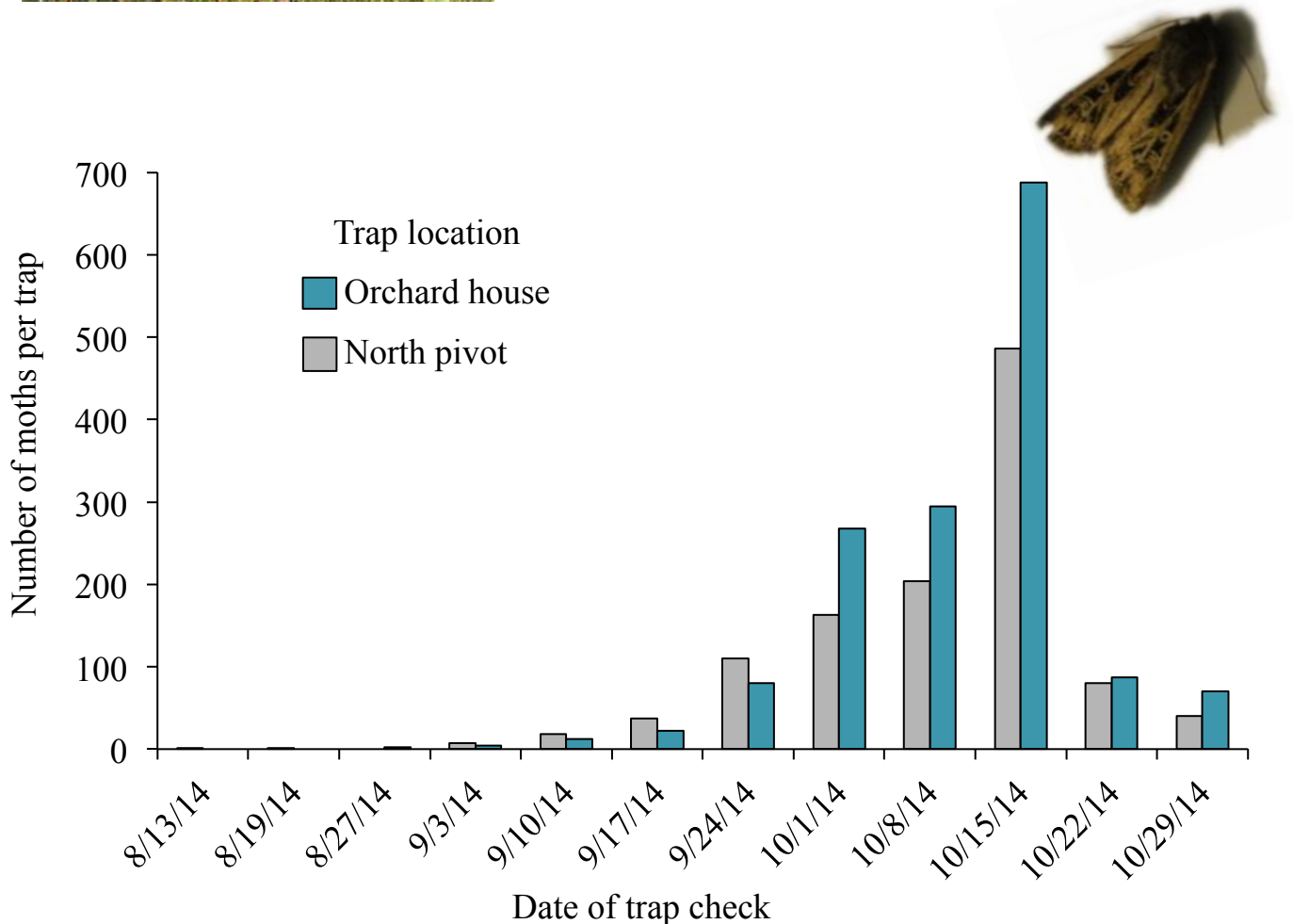


Figure 1. The number of army cutworm moths captured per trap for each sample date.

Capture numbers of army cutworm moths increased toward the end of September and peaked the fourth week of October (Fig 1). We captured only 13 pale western moths over the 12-week period, however we caught large numbers of army cutworm moths (Fig 2).

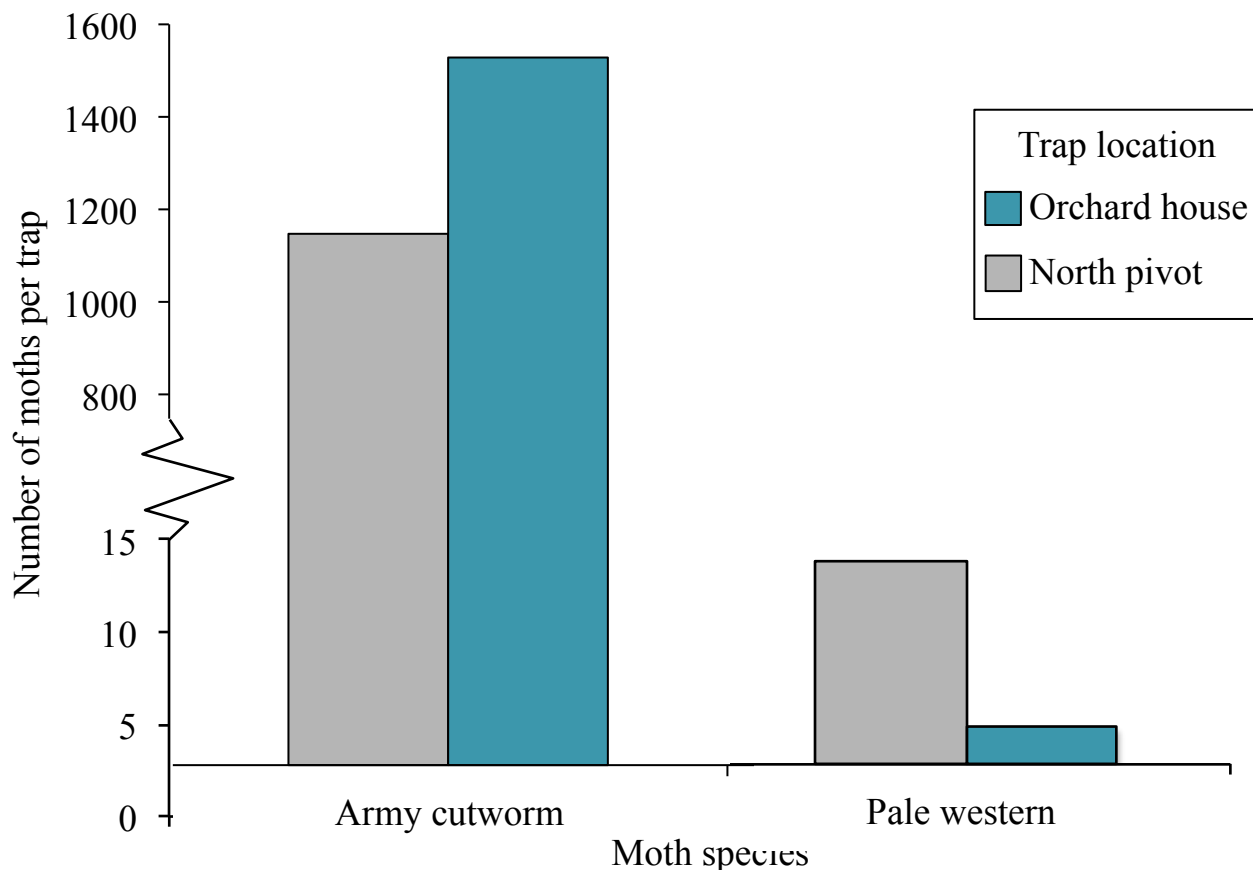


Figure 2. Total number of army cutworm and pale western cutworm moths captured over the entire 12-week monitor.

Army cutworm single trap captures of 800 or more over a seasonal monitoring period indicate a possible large and damaging spring larvae population (Blodgett et al. 2000). Our capture numbers suggest that we should use spring control measures. We will survey low-elevation restoration areas for cutworm activity early in the spring. For cutworm control we will use a pollinator-friendly insecticide (Intrepid; <http://www.dowagro.com/en-us/usag/product-solution-finder/insecticides/intrepid2f> ).

#### Literature cited

Blodgett S., Johnson G., Lanier W., Wago J. 2000. Pale western and army cutworms in Montana. <http://mtagalert.org/alertDocs/MontGuide%20-20%Cutworms.pdf>.