

**Common Name:**

Citrus Leafminer

Scientific Name:*Phyllocnistis citrella* (Stnt.) (Lepidoptera: Phyllocnistidae)

The moth lays two to three flattened, oval eggs under a citrus leaf near the midrib. Eggs hatch in three to five days into tiny caterpillars which burrow into the leaf. The caterpillars feed inside the leaf and leave a distinctive whitish track with a trail of black debris down the center. Larval development usually takes 16 to 18 days and the mature larvae are about 3.5 millimeters long. Larvae leave the mine to pupate and go to the edge of the leaf. The edge of the leaf is folded over and the larvae pupate inside. Adults are tiny, two to three millimeters in body length, with four black stripes on the wings. Hind wings are feathery. The general color of the moth is gray.

Larval tracks in the leaves reduce the photosynthetic capability of the plant. Heavily infested leaves may dry up or curl. The citrus leafminer was once a serious pest on Guam, but is now relatively unimportant.

The crops affected by the citrus leafminer are lemon, lime, tangerine, and other citrus. It is present throughout the Mariana Islands, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific, including American Samoa.

Control: The moth is under good control by an unknown natural enemy. Treatment is rarely necessary. Consult your Agricultural Extension Agent for information if emergency control measures are necessary or for information on chemical control. An agent can be reached by calling 734-2575, 734-2579, 734-2518 or 734-4753.

Prepared by Donald Nafus, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Entomology
CES Publication # PS 88-6