Onion thrips - *Thrips tabaci* L.

Due to their tiny size (adult female is. 0.8 - 1 mm long) to the bare eye it appears as if some small hairs would be caught on the surface of the yellow sticky trap. Using a binocular however, one can observe the insect which has two pairs of bristly wings. The antennae of *T. tabaci* have 7 segments, and there is a pair of bristle on the thorax. The body is light yellow to brownish in colour. However, one should bear in mind that the determination of the different thrips spp. is a task for the specialist.

The adult thrips, which is caught in the trap

The host plants of *T. tabaci* include tobacco, onions, cucumber, cabbage, peppers, pinks. Apart from these it feeds on the leaves and flowers of more than 100 plant species grown in agriculture .
Damage: on tobacco and cucumber the sucking starts along the main and secondary veins of the leaves, later they spread to other parts of the leave and the leave gets deformed. On cabbage the sucking results in the development of corky surfaces. On onions at the beginning silvery patches can be seen in the armpits of the leaves, later they spread to the whole surface, resulting in a greyish white leave. The thrips hide in between the leaves (cultivars with leaves standing more apart are less susceptible). On peppers corky patches appear at the part beside the calyx. In glass- or greenhouses *T. tabaci* usually causes damages together with *Frankliniella occidentalis*. In pinks the leaves get deformed, the buds do not flower, they grow assymetric, there are suckings on the petals.
T tabaci can propagate also viruses, I.e. the tomato spotted wilt virus. The virus survives in the overwintering thrips specimens, so the danger of new infection is there already from early spring!

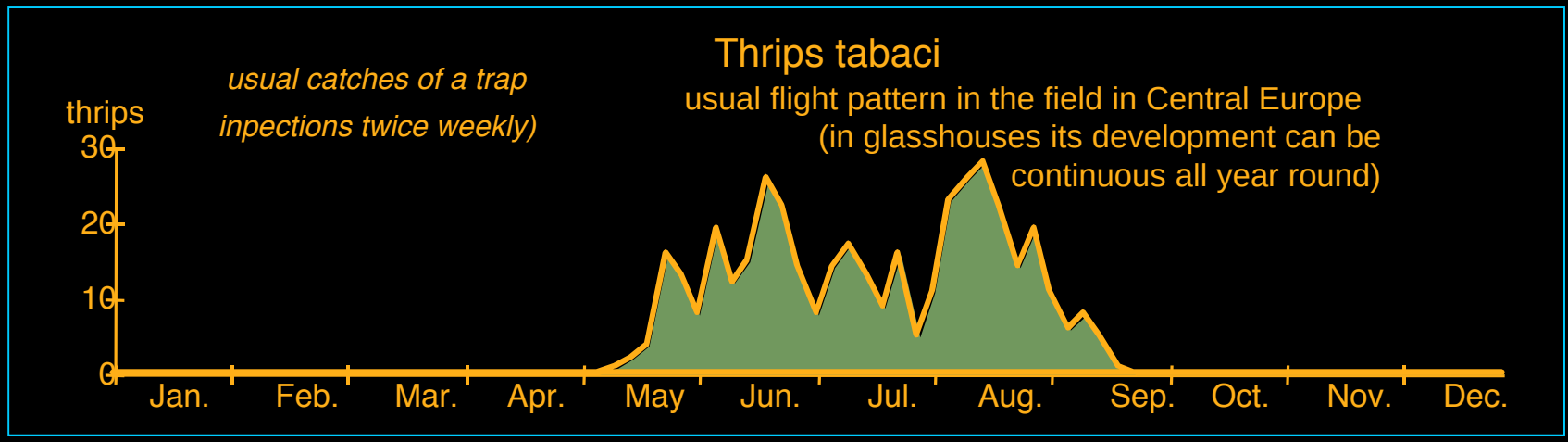
In glasshouses the fluorescent yellow sticky trap should be placed at the level of the height of the vegetation.Trapping should be conducted continously during all the year. In the field, the usual beginning of trapping is beginning of May (Central Europe).

The damage, which should be averted

Selectivity of the CSALOMON® yellow sticky traps: apart from *T. tabaci* many other insects are also captured on the sticky surface. From these *T. tabaci* can in most cases be separated on the basis of its tiny size. Several other pest insects also respond to yellow and can be trapped on yellow sticky traps (i.e. aphids, whiteflies like *Trialeurodes vaporariorum*, weevils like *Sitona spp.*, the cabbage root fly *Delia radicum*, etc.)

The CSALOMON® fluorescent yellow sticky traps attract insect by their colour stimulus. The traps retain their efficiency until the sticky surface is covered by insects caught (ca 6-8 weeks in field conditions). This in most cases is satisfactory for the monitoring of a full flight.

Trapping with yellow sticky traps is a method used almost exclusively in the control of*T. tabaci* in order to detect the invason of the pest in time, and to localize and liquidate infestation centers. Overwintering specimens can attack our plants already at the seedling phase, In fact, they cause the most severe damages at this phase. In order to prevent the invasion of the pest all openings of the glasshouse should be covered by fine vector screens. In the field, if our trap regularly catches thrips specimens, during the summer months insecticide treatments may become necessary. It is worthwhile to harmonize this with treatments against virus-vector aphids. Yellow sticky traps attract also aphids, so obervations on the catch can help in harmonization of sprays. In a closed plant culture an alternative control method can be the application of predatory*Amblyseius* and *Orius* spp.



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