



# **African Cereal Stem Borers: Economic Importance, Natural Enemies and Control**

*Andrew Polaszek*

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An assemblage of approximately 20 moth species belonging to the families *Crambidae*, *Pyralidae* and *Noctuidae* constitute the most important cereal pests in many parts of Africa. The caterpillars of these moths bore into the stems of maize, sorghum, millet and rice, often killing the plant, and are commonly known as stem or stalk borers. The cereals attacked are grown by smallholders to feed themselves and their families and are of great importance as the staple food for the population in most parts of Africa. Complex control measures, including the use of chemicals, are often inappropriate. This book provides fundamental information necessary for formulating integrated pest management of African cereal stem borers, in particular any natural enemy component. Firstly, the economically important species are characterized regionally and according to their biology and host plants, both wild and cultivated. The taxonomy of the moths, their larvae and their natural enemies is examined in detail and techniques of rearing are described. Illustrated keys are provided for their recognition, and their distributions and hosts are listed. Finally, the control measures currently in use and those being investigated, are summarized. This book is essential reading for applied entomologists, agronomists and extension workers with an active interest in cereal production in Africa and will be of value to all those concerned with integrated pest management in the tropics.

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