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FIRST RECORD OF RICE GRASSHOPPER *HIEROGLYPHUS NIGROREPLETUS* BOLIVAR DAMAGING NAPIER GRASS AND NAPIER MILLET CROPS IN PUNJAB

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ABSTRACT: Acridids, commonly known as grasshoppers and locusts are a large conspicuous group of about 9000 species. Of these, the rice grasshopper, *Hieroglyphus nigrorepletus* Bolivar is known to cause serious damage to maize, sorghum, rice, sugarcane and several other crops in the Indian subcontinent. During August-September 2009, the pest was recorded feeding on Napier grass (*Pennisetum purpureum*) and Napier millet (*P. purpureum* x *P. glaucum*) crops at Fodder Research Farm, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana for the first time. This is the first record of *H. nigrorepletus* from Napier grass and Napier millet in India and worldwide. The peak grasshopper population was recorded in the last week of August which declined slowly over September and October. Napier millet was the most preferred host plant with a peak population of 12 individuals/plant closely followed by Napier grass with 11.6 individuals/plant. Maize and sorghum had comparatively lower peak values of 5.6 and 4.4 individuals/plant, respectively.

KEY WORDS: Fodder crops, grasshoppers, *Hieroglyphus nigrorepletus*, napier grass, napier millet