

others. None of them, however, come in sufficient numbers to cause any appreciable injury to the trees and may therefore be disregarded by the fruit-grower. The most formidable enemy is the notorious

PLUM CURCULIO (*Conotrachelus nenuphar*), Figs. 40, 41. The work of this insect is so well known that it hardly needs description. The adult is a very small beetle belonging to the family of Snout-beetles, otherwise known as Curculios or Weevils. It is about one-fifth of an inch in length, dark in color, with a pair of shining black humps on the middle of the back, followed by a pale yellowish band; the snout is short and thick. It looks very much like a rough bit of bark and would therefore escape notice by those unfamiliar with it. The winter is spent in some hiding place by the adult beetle, which comes out when spring days are warm and flies to the trees in readiness for destructive work. I have often found it in the blossoms of plum-trees, probably feeding on the pollen, and waiting till the fruit becomes large enough for its attack.

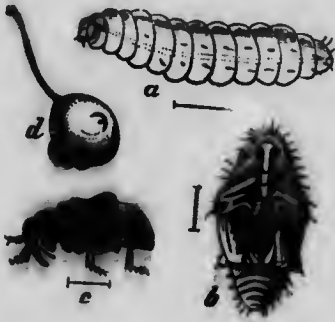


Fig. 40. Plum Curculio; a, larva; b, pupa; c, beetle; d, young fruit attacked.



Fig. 41. Plum Curculio attacking young fruit.

When the plum is as large as a good-sized pea, the female beetle bores a hole in the side, deposits an egg in it, and then cuts a crescent-shaped slit beside it so as to undermine the egg and prevent its being crushed by the growth of the fruit. The tiny grub that hatches from it buries itself in the green flesh and devours the greater part of it, especially around the stone. The injury causes the plum to fall prematurely to the ground; the grub then completes its growth, buries itself in the earth, transforms into the chrysalis state and finally develops into a beetle. Spraying with Paris green immediately after the blossoms have fallen will kill a large number of the beetles before the egg-laying is completed. Another method, which many fruit-growers consider more effective, is to jar the trees by sudden blows upon the limbs and catch the beetles which fall on a sheet below; all that are captured in this way should be destroyed at once before they have time to fly away. This should be done