

CASE WORM (*Nymphula depunctalis*)

Konkani: *Dhovem Pisollem*

Case Worm pests appear in low-lying areas whenever heavy rainfall occurs during July-August. The case-worm larvae cut the leaf blades into short lengths, construct tubular cases, remain inside these small rolls and feed on the foliage. This pest is semi aquatic in habits and is able to breathe under



Paddy leaves affected by case worm – Chodan and Madel villages, Goa 2010

water. In a badly infested field, a number of these leaf cases, white in colour could be seen attached to the plants. The case worm also appears in the *Rabi* season and causes severe damage.

The whitening of the grass blades in paddy is a typical sign of CASE WORM attack. The greenish caterpillar eats the leaf mesophyll that contains the green chlorophyll pigment and hence it looks white. It rolls a small (about one inch long) *beedi* of the rice leaf and cuts it to fall and float on the water to pupate before emerging as a white moth ("*dhovem pisollem*" in Konkani).

Important is the water regulation. If one can drain the water from the field and float a coir rope at the outlet, it will trap the pupae in the leaf *beedi*. Collect and crush on the road or any hard surface.

Where the earhead (of rice) has not emerged, CUT the affected leaves with a sickle and destroy the caterpillars inside.

You can use *VIKARSHA ORGANIC REPELLANT* (from Jafer Ali's AgriHelp – 94466 38348). It is **ovicidal**, (kills insect eggs) and a **repellent**. It works on *lepidopterans* (moths and Butterflies) and also reduces Plant Hoppers including Brown Plant Hopper (BPH) which is a problem in rice paddies.

