



Lantana biocontrol

Octotoma championi



OCTOTOMA CHAMPIONI

Octotoma championi, a leaf-mining beetle, has only a limited distribution.

ORIGIN

- *O. championi* occurs naturally in Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala and USA.
- Laboratory cultures of *O. championi* originate from Costa Rica.
- The insect was first released in Australia in 1975.

BIOLOGY

- Adults feed on upper leaf surfaces, and lay individual eggs through the upper leaf surface at the edge of adult-feeding scars.
- Larvae feed between the upper and lower epidermis, forming mines.
- Development time from egg to adult is about 40 days.
- Adults live for several months and may become inactive during winter when conditions are unfavourable.

AUSTRALIAN DISTRIBUTION AND IMPACT ON LANTANA

- *O. championi* is found only at a few sites in Australia, mainly on the Atherton Tableland and in central and southern New South Wales.
- The beetle is more abundant in cool, shady conditions.
- The beetle causes the greatest damage in late summer or autumn.
- *O. championi* has been found only on the pink and pink-edged red-flowering varieties of *Lantana camara*.

