

## Resource Use By *Apion aculeatum*, A Herbivore of Inflorescences of *Mimosa pigra*

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Aspects of the oviposition and feeding behaviour of *Apion aculeatum* (Coleoptera: Apionidae) were studied in quarantine. Both adults and larvae feed only on immature and open inflorescences of the weed *Mimosa pigra* (Mimosaceae). Adults feed preferentially on inflorescences one day before opening but oviposited preferentially in inflorescences several days before opening. The age of the inflorescence did not effect its suitability for larval development but food may become limiting in very young inflorescences. The evolution of oviposition preferences of *A. aculeatum* may have occurred under 2 opposing selective forces. The need to complete development before the inflorescence deteriorated would have selected for oviposition in young inflorescences. The greater availability of food and lower probability of abortion offered by older inflorescences would have selected for oviposition in these. The net outcome of these pressures has resulted in an adaptive oviposition strategy.

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