

# UGM Researchers Identify Ghost Grasshoppers Infestation

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Researchers from Faculty of Biology UGM have explored ghost grasshoppers (*Aularches miliaris*) that infest agriculture in Gunungkidul regency, Yogyakarta.

Reportedly, thousands of colourful insects have swarmed local farms in the past two weeks and increased in number.

"The infestation of grasshoppers in Gunungkidul is still considered a local nature," said one researcher, Drs. Sudaryadi, M.Kes, at Faculty of Biology UGM recently.

Along with Soenarwan Hery Purwanto, M.Kes., and Drs. Hari Purwanto, MP, Ph.D., they did research in Karangrejek and Baleharjo villages in Wonosari sub-district on 23 January 2018.

"We found adult phase and pre-adult phase of a considerable number grasshoppers in elephant grass. But these were not found at a 500 meter distance from the point where the grasshoppers were," he said.



Even so, Sudaryadi called on the local people to be on alert because many of the insects are still pre-adult.

"In the next few weeks, ghost grasshoppers will still be found, so a survey needs to be done periodically to monitor the case," he said.

The colourful insect has a life cycle which is longer than of other grasshoppers. It is active at night but moves slowly.

"On pest controls of ghost grasshoppers, it can be done manually," he added.

The researchers are now observing feed preference of the ghost grasshoppers to know possibilities of infestation, and the habitat for egg laying as well as possible results of natural predators from ghost grasshoppers.

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