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Cover

Berdnikov et al (pp 37-39 this issue) conclude that the dominant gene for neoplastic pods, *Np*, may confer a measure of resistance to pea weevil (*Bruchus pisorum* L.), a common pest of garden pea. Pods with allele *Np* form pustule-like outgrowths under certain environmental conditions as a result of proliferation of the epidermal cells (Dodds and Matthews, 1966; Nuttal and Lyall, 1964). Similar outgrowths also form in response to *Bruchus* ovipositions (Vasilev, 1939). Berdnikov et al found that 6-8 days after oviposition, these outgrowths underwent necrosis and eventually fell away removing any unhatched eggs. However, the majority of the larvae managed to hatch earlier and penetrate the pods. Thus the strategy appeared not to be a very effective defence. Nevertheless, they found a high concentration of the *Np* allele among accessions from regions where pressure from the pest was high.

The cover photo (Berdnikov et al, Fig. 1) shows a purple pod of genotype *Np/np* with two bands of white, pustule-like outgrowths formed in response to application, through a glass capillary, of a 0.9% NaCl solution containing the homogenised remains of a *Bruchus* individual (black arrow). NaCl solution without the *Bruchus* homogenate (white arrow) failed to evoke this response. Pods lacking the *Np* allele did not respond to the *Bruchus* homogenate.