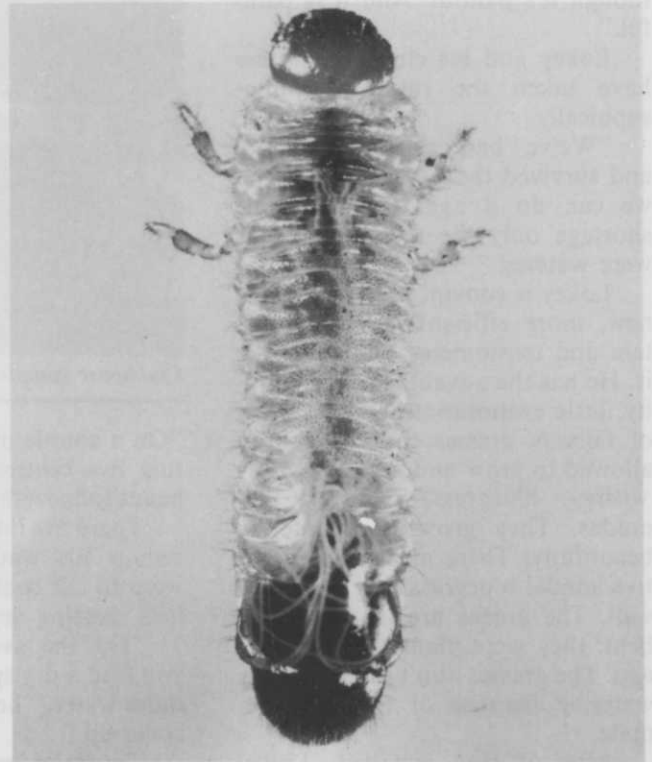


Japanese Beetle Parasite Found in the Northeast

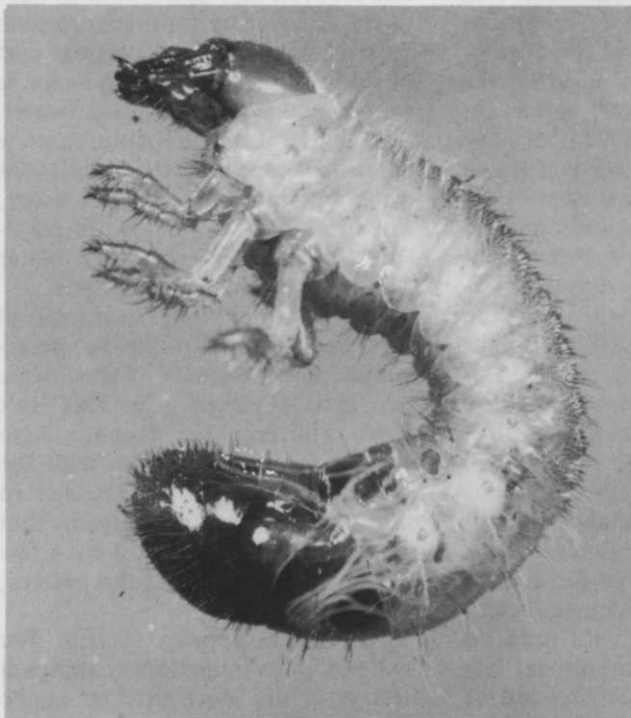
As was reported in the January news section of WEEDS TREES & TURF, a new nematode parasite has been discovered in the Northeast. The parasite is being studied as another possible natural method to control the insect. Since the January report pictures of the parasite attacking the larvae of the beetle have been taken at the U.S. Agriculture Department's Japanese Beetle Laboratory at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster, and the pictures are published on this page.

Apparently, Japanese beetle larvae become infected by the merimithids in late summer. Laboratory entomologist M. G. Kelin said the merimithids emerged in March from larvae collected in October and held in cold storage until January. Parasites emerged in mid-May from larvae collected in April.

The thread-like merimithids, about nine inches long, could be observed coiled inside the collected larvae. At the time of emergence, individual grubs showed little sign of life except feeble movement of the mouthparts. A single merimithid normally emerged from each grub, although as many as three parasites were recovered from one host. Most of the host larvae had completed their third moult when the merimithids emerged.



The merimithids, about nine inches long, could easily be observed coiled inside the larvae since they extended from the middle region to the second-last abdominal segment.



Most of the nematode was found dorsally, though several strands were visible on the ventral side.



The merimithids emerged either through the intersegmental membrane of the first body joint of the legs or through the mouth of the larvae.