

✓ ASSOCIATION OF *STEPHANITIS TYPICUS* DISTANT WITH COCONUT ROOT (WILT) DISEASE

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The root (wilt) disease of coconut, widely prevalent in Kerala is a major threat to this important cash crop. A sap-transmissible pathogen has been demonstrated to be systemically present in the affected palms. *Stephanitis typicus* Dist. was first reported as a possible vector of the pathogen in 1956. Positive transmission of the disease through this insect both in the field and under controlled conditions were reported. Further studies on this insect have shown that it is also a minor pest of coconut foliage. The range of its food plants, details of life history and information on the predacious habits and life-history of a natural enemy in the field have been gathered. Other studies have thrown light on the pattern of distribution of the insect on the palm, seasonal abundance of the bug in the field and its correlation with meteorological factors as well as its comparative abundance in healthy and diseased trees.