

# Occurrence of Insect Pests on Cashew

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Many insects injure cashew by feeding on different plant parts. Borers feeding inside stems and roots, weevils and beetles feeding on shoots, panicles and fruits; bugs sucking sap from shoots, panicles and fruits, aphids and mealy bugs sucking sap and forming encrustations on tender portions and caterpillars feeding on leaves and flowers are of common occurrence. They cause mild to severe injury, loss in yield and sometimes death of the tree itself.

Pillai, Dubey and Singh (1976) listed 60 insect pests on cashew. Six more occasional insects were recorded by the author (in press). The seasonal occurrence, damage and intensity of infestation of the more common insect pests were studied on 200 cashew trees in the farm of the Institute at Vittal, Karnataka. 100 shoots/panicles per tree were observed, monthly thrice, for two years. Results are summarised in the table. *Placaederus ferrugineus* L. is the stem and root borer commonly observed on cashew. The grub gains entry into the tree through crevices, wounds and other injuries in the trunk at or near the bole region and feed on the tissues. If the infestation is not detected and timely controlled, it kills the tree. The tea mosquito *Helopeltis antonii* S. damages the new shoots, panicles and immature fruits. Attack results in shoot and panicle blight and

more than 30% loss in nuts (Pillai *at a* 1976). The stem and root borer and tea mosquito are persistent pests and cause sufficient economic injury to the tree. Regular plant protection operations are needed for their control. Others are only occasional pests and are usually under natural control. But sometimes the damage done by the minor beetles and weevils can lead to the damage and drying up of the tender foliage and panicles particularly in seedlings and young trees. Pillai *at al* (1976) recommended curative control measures for these pests. The root and stem borers are effectively controlled by removal of infested and dead trees. During the early stages of infestation mechanical removal of the immature stages of the pest and swabbing the affected area with 0.1% carbaryl, dimethoate or fenitrothion suspension effectively controls this pest. Spraying with endosulfan 0.05% twice at the time of new flush and panicle emergence and, if required, a third spray at the time of fruit set successfully controls tea mosquito infestation. The endosulfan spray used against tea mosquito controls the bugs and caterpillars occurring during this season. Spraying with carbaryl 0.05% suspension, as and when the pest occurs, controls the beetle, weevil and other defoliators. Timely precautions may be taken up for the control of these enemies and save the crop from their depredations.

Table. Seasonal occurrence, damage and intensity of infestation by insect pests on cashew (Summary of observations for two years)

S. No.	Name	Damage	Occurrence/intensity of infestation												
			Jan.	Febr.	Mar.	Ap.	May.	Ju.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
1.	<i>Plocaederus ferrugineus</i> L.	Bores into stems and roots and kills the tree during severe infestation.	*	*	*	**	****	**	**	**	**	**	*	*	*
2.	<i>Helipelta antonii</i> s	Sucks sap from new shoots, panicles and fruits resulting in blight and immature fruit drop.	****	****	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	***
3.	<i>Pachypeltis</i> sp.	Sucks sap from new shoots and panicles and causes them to blight.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	*	*	*	*	**	*
4.	<i>Acrocercops syngamma</i> M	Mines into young leaves and causes blisters	*	*	*	*	---	---	**	**	**	**	*	*	*
5.	<i>Macalla moncusalis</i> Walk	Makes web on new shoots and panicles and feeds on them.	*	**	**	*	---	---	---	---	---	---	*	*	**
6.	<i>Lypsethes</i> sp.	Feeds on new shoots	---	---	---	*	****	***	*	*	*	*	*	*	---
7.	<i>Monolepis longitarvus</i> Jac.	Congregates and feeds on tender leaves leaving only the veins	---	---	---	*	***	****	***	***	***	***	*	*	*
8.	<i>Arodepus marginatus</i> (Pasc.)	Congregates and feeds on new shoots	---	---	---	---	*	**	**	**	**	**	*	*	*
9.	<i>Dereodus sparvus</i> Boh.	Feeds on new shoots	*	*	*	*	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	*
10.	<i>Popillia complanata</i> Newm.	Feeds on flowers	*	*	*	*	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	*
11.	<i>Leptocentrus</i> sp.	Sucks sap from new shoots and panicles	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
12.	<i>Flata ferrugata</i> Fabr.	Sucks sap from new shoots and panicles	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
13.	<i>Trocoptera odiniae</i> Vdg.	Sucks sap from shoots, panicles and fruits.	**	**	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
14.	<i>Ferrisia virgata</i> (Ckll.)	Sucks sap from shoots, panicles and fruits	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
15.	<i>Melanostria hyrtaca</i> Cram.	Caterpillars feed on tender leaves.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	*	**	**	**	**	*
16.	<i>Ceryx imaoon</i> Cramer	Caterpillars feed on tender leaves	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	**

--- = absent \* = mild \*\* = moderate \*\*\* = severe \*\*\*\* = very severe