

Nine Minor Insect Pests on Cashew

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Cashew tree is attacked by a number of insect pests. Pillai *et al* (1976) listed 60 insect pests including 12 new records on cashew. Sathiamma (1978) gave a note on the seasonal occurrence and intensity of infestation by 16 insect pests on this crop. The damage and population abundance of nine insect pests observed in South India are summarized in this note.

ORDER : COLEOPTERA

1. *Monolepta longitarsus* Jac (Galerucinae : Chrysomelidae.)

M. longitarsus is observed as a pest on young cashew trees on the West Coast of India during June to August (Abraham, 1959 ; Pillai *et al* (1976). The red and reddish black beetles feed on the stem and leaves of tender shoots and damage nearly 40% of new flushes. They also feed on the cashew flowers. The adults congregate on new flushes in colonies consisting of about 75 beetles (range 54 - 250). The beetle is 3.7 mm long and 1.8 mm wide. They have been observed in the field from May to December, but are abundant during the months of June to September.

2. *Arodepus marginatus* (Pasc). (Attelabidae).

This is the common leaf weevil on cashew (Pillai *et al* 1976) Adults congregate on tender foliage and feed on the

leaves usually from the ventral surface of the leaves keeping the upper epidermis intact. They occur either alone or in association with *M. longitarsus*. They are brown in colour and are 4 mm long and 2 mm wide. *Arodepus* occurs in the field from July to November.

3. *Lypesthes* sp. (Eumolpinae : Chrysomelidae)

The adults nibble the tender shoots and panicles and cause negligible damage. Adults are milky white in colour and are stout and rounded in shape. They are 5.7-6.5 mm long and 3-4 mm wide. They are present on cashew from April to August. This is a new record of the pest on cashew.

4. *Dereodus sparsus* Boh. (Curculionidae)

The adults feed on both tender and mature leaves. Damage is very negligible. These weevils are long and stout with a pale brown to black colour and are 11.5 mm long and 4 mm wide. They occur from February to April. This is a new record.

ORDER : HEMIPTERA

5. *Pachypeltis maesarum* Kirk. (Miridae)

The adult and nymph bugs suck sap from tender stems and leaves with the result that the new shoots dry up. The injury caused is similar to that by *H. antonii*.

One bug can cause about 140 lesions in a day. They are deep orange coloured and possess a prominent spineless white scutellum, short antennae and short proboscis. The bugs are 6.3-7.8 mm long and 1.3-1.9 mm wide. Egg and nymphal periods last for 9 and 17 days respectively. Adult longevity is about 11 days. Female lays about 42 eggs. They are found in the field from August to December. Remamony and Abraham (1977) recorded this as a serious pest of cashew in Kerala. Knight (1939) and Silva (1944) recorded *Pachypeltis* = (*Monalonion*) *shaefferi* on cashew from Brazil.

6. *Leptocentrus* sp (Membracinae : Membracidae)

The hoppers suck sap from tender tissues of shoots and inflorescences. Adults are 3.5 mm long and 1.5mm wide. Females lay eggs on shoots in slits. Egg period is 10-12 days. This is a minor pest and occurs in the field from October to April. This is a new record.

7. *Flata ferrugata* (Flatidae)

Pillai *et al* (1976) reported *Flata* sp. as a minor pest on cashew inflorescence. This pest feeds on tender shoots also. Damage done is negligible. The adult bugs have pale green wings. Females are 15 mm long and 10 mm wide. They occur from December to April.

8. *Walkeriana* sp. (Margarodidae)

The immature bugs form encrustations on the bark during February to March. This is a new record.

ORDER : LEPIDOPTERA

9. *Ceryx imaon* Cramer

The caterpillars live gregariously and feed on tender leaves. They are light brown in colour with long hairs on the body. Butterflies are black in colour with white spotted wings. Females are 13 mm long and 30mm wide. They lay eggs in clusters on foliage. Average fecundity is 505 per female. Egg period is five days and adult longevity is 10 days under laboratory conditions. They are abundant during October to December. This is a new record on cashew.

Usually these pests appear occasionally and cause only minor injury. But *M. longitarsus*, *A. marginatus* and *P. mae-arum* severely damage the new shoot and flush of the nursery seedlings and young trees.

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