

RECORD OF A COREID BUG (NUT CRINKLER) AS A NEW PEST OF COCONUT IN INDIA

Reports were received as early as 1961 from different parts in Kerala on the shedding of immature coconuts which presented characteristic cracks and gummosis. Recently, nymphs and adults of a coreid bug were observed in association with such nuts in a garden adjacent to this research institute. In the laboratory, these bugs fed on female flowers (buttons) and immature nuts. The feeding punctures produced just below the perianth developed into necrotic lesions, which left permanent somewhat deep furrows or crinkles with gummosis. In the field, four nymphs of the bug caged with muslin cloth bag on inflorescence had fed on all the 21 one month old buttons and caused their shedding. In a bunch, those buttons which escaped shedding in spite of the attack by the bug developed into under-sized or barren nuts.

These nut-crinklers with antennae black except for the white basal half of the terminal joint, are reddish-brown above, pale beneath. Adults measure 1.7 to 1.9 cm long and 0.5 to 0.6 cm wide at mesothorax. Nymphs are dark

reddish-brown with two black spots on the dorsal aspect of abdomen, at the centre, one behind the other. They are provisionally identified as *Amblypelta* sp. *A. cocophaga* China is reported causing the same type of damage in Solomon Islands (Phillips, 1940¹; O'Connor, 1950²). Brown (1955)³ and Vanderplank (1958)⁴ reported a similar bug *Pseudotheraptus wayi* Brown as a serious pest of coconut palm in East Africa, Zanzibar and neighbouring Islands, causing nearly identical loss to the crop. In India, we are reporting the pest for the first time.

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- 1 Phillips, J. S., *Full. Ent. Res.*, 1940, 31, 295.
- 2 O'Connor, B. A., *Agric. J. Fiji.*, 1950, 21, 21.
- 3 Brown, F. S., *Bull. Ent. Res.*, 1955, 46, 221
- 4 Vanderplank, F. L., *Ibid.*, 1958, 49, 559.