



Pacific Pests and Pathogens - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Cocoa mirids (274)



Photo 1. *Pseudodoniella* species from Papua New Guinea. Note the "hump" on the back.



Photo 2. *Pseudodoniella* species, as in Photo 1. From above, showing details of the "hump".



Photo 3. *Helopeltis* sp. from Townsville, Australia. Long antennae, slender body and a spine on the plate between the forewings and behind the thorax distinguishes this insect from *Pseudodoniella*.

Summary

- Narrow distribution. Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea. On cocoa, and many other crops. Important pests.
- Eggs laid in cocoa pods. *Pseudodoniella* has hump, *Helopeltis* has long antennae, and a spine on the back. Direct damage is done when mirids feed on young and mature pods, and shoots, and indirectly allowing entry of fungi, causing rots and dieback.
- Cultural control: avoid *Leucaena* shade over cocoa in mirid areas, instead use coconuts to encourage ants that are antagonistic to mirids.
- Chemical control: use synthetic pyrethroids (e.g., bifenthrin) or imidacloprid, treating "hot spots" only, not the whole plantation..

Common Name

Cocoa mirids

Scientific Name

Helopeltis clavifer and *Pseudodoniella* species (*Pseudodoniella typica*, *Pseudodoniella laensis*, *Pseudodoniella pacifica*).

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Information from Moxon JE (1992) Insect pests of cocoa in Papua New Guinea, importance and control. In: Keane PJ, Putter CAJ (eds) 'Cocoa pest and disease management in the Southeast Asia and Australasia'. FAO Plant Production and Protection Paper 112, pp 129-144. Rome; and from Hori K (2000) Possible cause of disease symptoms resulting from the feeding of phytophagous heteroptera. In: Schaefer CW, Panizzi AR (eds.) 'Heteroptera of economic importance'. CRC Press, pp 11-36. Photo 3 Graeme Cocks Bowerbird. (<http://www.bowerbird.org.au/observations/21199>).

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