



Pacific Pests and Pathogens - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

<https://apps.lucidcentral.org/ppp/>

Taro planthopper (041)



Photo 1. Different stages of *Tarophagus* species. Note some of the mature forms have wings.



Photo 2. Mature, wingless, forms of *Tarophagus* species.



Photo 3. *Tarophagus* planthoppers prefer sites on the plant where humidity is highest, either within the rolled leaf, on the petioles beneath the leaf blade or between the petioles at the base of the plant.



Photo 4. Winged form of *Tarophagus* species.



Photo 5. Large numbers of *Tarophagus* sp. on taro in the field.



Photo 6. The Philippines egg-sucking bug, *Cyrtorhinus fulvus*.



Photo 7. Mature forms of *Tarophagus* species and ants; the latter are attracted to the honeydew produced by the planthoppers.

Summary

- Narrow distribution. Southeast Asia, Oceania. Three types. On taro. An important pest.
- The planthoppers damage taro by sucking the sap from the leaves. In dry times, when numbers are high, the leaves bend down. They spread several viruses.
- Winged adults arrive first in new gardens, laying eggs in the base of leaf stalks, producing wingless adults.
- Natural enemies: egg-sucking bug.
- Cultural control: avoid planting new crops next to old; remove outer leaves with eggs before planting “tops”. Note that rains drown the young nymphs.
- Chemical control: PDPs: neem, pyrethrum, or derris; or use synthetic pyrethroids, but they are likely to kill natural enemies.

Common Name

Taro planthopper

Scientific Name

Tarophagus spp. Previously, only one species was recognised, *Tarophagus proserpina*. In 1989, a study found there were three: *Tarophagus colocasiae*, *Tarophagus persephone* and *Tarophagus proserpina*.

AUTHORS Helen Tsatsia & Graeme Jackson
Photo 4 Graham Teakle, Canberra.

Produced with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research under project PC/2010/090: *Strengthening integrated crop management research in the Pacific Islands in support of sustainable intensification of high-value crop production*, implemented by the University of Queensland and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

This mini fact sheet is a part of the app *Pacific Pests and Pathogens*

The mobile application is available from the Google Play Store and Apple iTunes.

