



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Cassava *Amblypelta* dieback (019)



Photo 1. Shoot dieback on cassava caused by *Amblypelta* on cassava (Solomon Islands).



Photo 2. Close-up of the cankers on a cassava shoot after feeding by *Amblypelta*. Note the damaged areas have small black dots over them; these are the spore-containing sacs of a fungus that has invaded the areas damaged by *Amblypelta*.



Photo 3. Shoot dieback caused by *Amblypelta* on cassava (southern highlands, Papua New Guinea).



Photo 4. Shoot-tip dieback caused by *Amblypelta* on cassava (Malaita, Solomon Islands).



Photo 5. Stem cankers on cassava caused by *Amblypelta* (foreground), with early death of young shoots in background.



Photo 6. Severe cassava stem cankers (lower part) caused by *Amblypelta* with death of stem above (upper part).



Photo 7. *Amblypelta* adult. (Note, this is unlikely to be the species on cassava and coconut. The species on coconut is *Amblypelta cocophaga*; that on cassava has yet to be identified.)



Photo 8. *Amblypelta* nymph. (Note, this is unlikely to be the species on cassava and coconut. The species on coconut is *Amblypelta cocophaga*; that on cassava has yet to be identified.)

Summary

- Narrow distribution. Southeast Asia, Oceania. On *Eucalyptus deglupta* and cassava, causing shoot-tip wilt and dieback, nut fall of coconut and pod distortion on cocoa. Also on papaya, mango and passionfruit. Several species. An important pest.
- Eggs laid on or near to the host; nymphs brown with long legs. Adults similar, up to 20 mm, and winged.
- Long needle-like mouth parts cause fruit spotting and distortions, fruit drop, stem cankers, and wilts.
- Natural enemies: encourage ants, e.g., *Oecophylla*.
- Cultural control: difficult as a few insects do much damage; early morning handpicking (cassava).
- Chemical control: PDPs: derris, or pyrethrum; or synthetic pyrethroids and malathion.

Common Name

Cassava shoot dieback, coconut premature nut fall

Scientific Name

Amblypelta species. The species on cassava has not been determined.

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Information from CABI (2017) *Amblypelta cocophaga* (coconut bug). Crop Protection Compendium. (www.cabi.org/cpc). Photos 1&2 Brisbane Insects and Spiders website. (http://www.brisbaneinsects.com/brisbane_coreidbugs/GreenCoonBugs.htm). Photo 5 Michael Atuai. PNG LNG Livelihood Restoration Team.

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