



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Coconut rhinoceros beetle - Melanesian (057)



Photo 1. Hole in stem of betel nut bored by the Melanesian coconut rhinoceros beetle, *Scapanes australis*.



Photo 2. *Scapanes australis* third stage larvae.



Photo 3. *Scapanes australis*, male.

Summary

- Widespread distribution. Southeast Asia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands. On coconut, oil palm, betel nuts; also, banana, sugarcane, wild palms. Important on palms <5-years-old, in newly cleared forests; less when logs rot away.
- Eggs, large (5 x 3 mm) white, laid near rotting logs and other debris; larvae C-shaped up to 10 cm; adults black (4-6 mm long), horned; strong flyers.
- Cultural control: replant coconuts in old plantations; remove/destroy breeding sites, e.g., large logs; use ground legumes, e.g., *Pueraria* or *Mucuna*; use fast growing varieties, e.g., Gazelle Tall in Papua New Guinea.
- Chemical control: trap with pheromone (both sexes).

Common Name

Melanesian rhinoceros beetle, coconut rhinoceros beetle, *Scapanes*

Scientific Name

Scapanes australis. Different sub-species (*Scapanes australis australis* and *Scapanes australis grossepunctatus*) exist in Papua New Guinea; the situation in Solomon Islands has not been studied.

Information from Waterhouse DF, Norris KR (1987) *Biological Control Pacific Prospects*. Inkata Press, Melbourne. Photo 1 Pita Tikai, SPC, Honiara, Solomon Islands. Photos 2&3 L. Beaudoin-Ollivier, CABI (2010) *Scapanes australis* (rhinoceros beetle) Crop Protection Compendium. (www.cabi.org/cpc).

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