



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Teak defoliator (435)



Photo 1. Larva and adult of the teak defoliator, *Hyblaea puera*. Note the triangular shape of the adult and that the hindwings are completely covered by the forewings.



Photo 2. Larva of the teak defoliator, *Hyblaea puera*.



Photo 3. Damage of a teak tree by the teak defoliator, *Hyblaea puera*. Note the damage is at the margins of the leaves.



Photo 4. Adult teak defoliator, *Hyblaea puera*.

Summary

- Widespread. Asia, Africa, South and Central America, the Caribbean, Oceania. In Australia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands.
- Major pest in teak plantations of southern India; only occasional outbreaks in Africa, Central and South America. Also on mangrove, *Vitex*, African tulip tree and more. Outbreaks (repeated defoliation) extends time taken for trees to mature.
- Eggs laid in veins underside of leaves, larvae greenish-black heads, white lines along sides and wide orange-ochre bands along back, long scattered hairs. Larvae fold leaf margin and eat inside. When mature, up to 4.5 cm, descend on silken threads, making cocoons from dried leaves and then pupate. Adults greyish-brown forewings, hindwings black with orange-yellow spots, wingspan 3-4 cm.
- Spread in India possibly on pre-monsoonal winds initiating populations on new leaf flushes leading to massive explosions and defoliation.
- Natural enemies: not effective in preventing damage against sudden population explosions.
- Chemical control: Bt and neem effective but application (fogging, aircraft) costly.

Common Name

Teak defoliator

Scientific Name

Hyblaea puera. A moth in the Hyblaeidae.

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Information from CABi (2019) *Hyblaea puera* (teak defoliator). Crop Protection Compendium. (<http://www.cabi.org/cpc>); and *Hyblaea puera*. Wikipedia. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyblaea_puera). Photo 4 *Hyblaea puera* Cramer. 3. Systematic Names. CSIRO. Department of Agriculture & Forestry. Australian Government. (http://www.ces.csiro.au/aicn/system/c_2591.htm).

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