

Coconut scale (104)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. Main hosts are coconuts and banana, but also avocado, breadfruit, cassava, guava, oil palm, sugarcane. An important pest.
- It is an armoured scale with a hard covering over its body. Eggs are laid under the scale; "crawlers" (nymphs) hatch, disperse (walk, wind, animals), but soon settle to feed and form the armour. Males are tiny, mosquito-like, mate and die. Females produce offspring even without mating.
- If numerous, fronds yellow, dry, fall and palms die.
- Natural enemies: ladybird beetles, parasitoid wasps.
- Cultural control: none recommended.
- Chemical control: soap, white or horticultural oils; do not use synthetic insecticides as they will destroy predators and parasitoids, and delay natural control.



Photo 1. Coconut frond showing damage due to coconut scale, *Aspidiotus destructor*.



Photo 2. Female coconut scale, *Aspidiotus destructor*. Note that the body of the insect can be seen beneath the scale, hence the alternative name of 'transparent scale'.

Common Name

Coconut scale, transparent scale

Scientific Name

Aspidiotus destructor

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Information from Waterhouse DF, Norris KR (1987) *Aspidiotus destructor* (Signoret). *Biological Control Pacific Prospects*. Inkata Press; and from Watson GA, et al. (2016) *Aspidiotus rigidus* Reyne (Hemiptera: Diaspididae): a devastating pest of coconuts in the Philippines. *Agriculture and Forest Entomology* 17:1-8

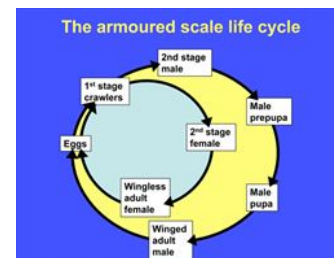


Diagram. Life-cycle of an armoured scale.

(https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264159039_Aspidiotus_rigidus_Reyne_Hemiptera_Diaspididae_A_devastating_pest_of_coconut_in_the_Philippines#:~:text=The%20coconut%20scale%20insect%2C%20A%20Aspidiotus,Philippines%20between%202010%20and%202015). Photo 1 Mani Mua. Sigatok Research Station. SPC, Fiji. Photo 2 (and Diagram) Gillian Watson, Senior Insect Biosystematist, Plant Pest Diagnostics Branch, California Department of Food & Agriculture, Sacramento, CA, USA.

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