



## Occurrence of large spine- footed bug, *Physomerus grossipes* Fabricius (Coreidae: Hemiptera) on banana in India

**B. Padmanaban\* and N.M. Patil# and N.B. Shaikh#**

ICAR-National Research Centre for Banana, Tiruchirapalli- 620 102, Tamil Nadu, India;

#Banana Research Station, Jalgoan, Maharashtra, India.

Email: B.Padmanaban.nrcb@icar.gov.in

**ABSTRACT:** A new coreid bug identified as *Physomerus grossipes* Fabricius was recorded infesting banana as a pest. The coreid bug sucks the pulp from the fingers and the feeding damage results in the development of sunken black spots on the peel. © 2016 Association for Advancement of Entomology

**KEYWORDS:** large spine- footed bug, *Physomerus grossipes* Fabricius, Banana, India

Banana and plantains are infested by more than a dozen pests (Padmanaban and Mustafa, 2010). During our recent survey undertaken in certain banana growing districts of Maharashtra viz., Pune, Raver, Jalgoan, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad and Bhusawal, a new coreid bug was recorded infesting on banana fingers, the adults and nymphs were aggregated on banana stem and bunches (Fig. 1-3). The coreid bug sucks on the fingers and feeding damage results in the development of sunken black spots on the peel and the removal of peel indicated the damage on pulp also. The adults and nymphs were found on the stem and bunch. This appears to be a minor pest and causing damage to very few hands on the bunch and the affected fingers were found unfit for sale. The pest has been identified as large spine footed bug, *Physomerus grossipes* Fabricius (Coreidae: Hemiptera). The pest has been recorded on cv. Grand Naine in Raver, Jalgoan and Narayangoan in Jumner, Jalgoan and Pune districts of Maharashtra, India. The pest incidence was first noticed during March 2010 where as severe incidence was reported in August 2016.

Review of literature indicated that the bug is native

to South East Asia and the species has spread to Pacific Islands. The pest has been reported to feed on a variety of plants, considered as a minor pest of sweet potato. The nymph and attacks on stem and petioles of sweet potato causing stunted growth and wilting. The other host plants reported include *Ipomoea aquatica*, *I. triloba* and *Bacilla rubra* (Broddley, 1991; Ronato, 1984 and Swaine *et al.*, 1991). In Australia, a similar fruit spotting bug, *Amblypelta lutescens* has been reported on banana in southern Queensland (Astridge *et al.*, 2004) the bug damage has been reported on avocados, bananas, custard apple, macademia nuts, pecans and citrus. Eulophid wasp parasitization on the eggs of this coreid bug has been reported under field conditions (Amalin *et al.*, 1993).

The coreid bug damage is noticed only few plants in a garden and the feeding damage is very severe affecting the cosmetic value and pulp quality and not fit for sale. The bug damage in endemic areas can be prevented easily by the use of polypropylene bunch sleeves; the sleeve has to be tied on bunches immediately after opening of all hands. Bunch sleeving prevents the bug infestation and gets

\* Author for correspondence



**Fig.1 Coreid bug on banana finger**



**Fig.2 Feeding damage on banana fingers cv. Grand Naine**



**Fig.3 Adults and nymphs aggregation**

blemishes free golden yellow colour banana fingers of good quality.

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