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First report of the invasive South American pinhole borer *Euplatypus paralellus* (F) (Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Platypodinae) on arecanut

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ABSTRACT: The invasive South American pinhole borer *Euplatypus paralellus* (F) is reported for the first time on arecanut palms from Kasaragod, Kerala, India.

KEY WORDS: *Euplatypus paralellus*, Arecanut, Kerala, India

Arecanut is an important commercial crop in India, Karnataka, Kerala and Assam being the leading producers in the country. Twenty nine out of 180 plants of Mohitnagar variety of arecanut planted in 2014 were found attacked by an insect at Kalichamaram, Kasaragod District, Kerala (12.2557° N, 75.1341° E) in December, 2018. Attacked plants exhibited massive discolouration of the trunk (Fig. 1) that extends into deeper layers (Fig. 2), pinholes with gummy exudation (Fig. 3) as well as pin holes with powdery frass. Pinholes were observed with gummy exudation on the green part of the tree trunk as well as between the leaf axils. Live beetles were found inside the pinhole (Fig. 4). The attacked plants showed yellowing and wilting and subsequent death. The insect was identified as the invasive South American pinhole borer *Euplatypus paralellus* (F.) (Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Platypodinae).

It is a widely distributed (Wood and Bright, 1992; Beaver, 2013) polyphagous ambrosia beetle reported on 82 species in 25 families of trees (Gümüº and Ergün, 2015), including rubber in Brazil (Silva *et al*., 2013). Li *et al*. (2018) reported its occurrence in China. Most ambrosia beetles infest stressed, dying or recently felled trees, while *E. parallelus* is capable of attacking healthy trees (Silva *et al*., 2013). Maruthadurai (2013) and Maruthadurai *et al*. (2014) reported its incidence on cashew from Goa. It has also been recorded on coconut (Bark and Ambrosia beetles data base, 2018). Sangamesh and Prathapan recorded it on rubber in Kannur, Kerala in 2018 (Personal communication). Infestation of *E. parallelus* on healthy arecanut palms (*Areca catechu* L.) is reported for the first time, from Kerala, India.

This invasive beetle, being recorded on four most important cash crops of Kerala such as arecanut, cashew, coconut and rubber, poses a serious threat to the agrarian economy of the state.

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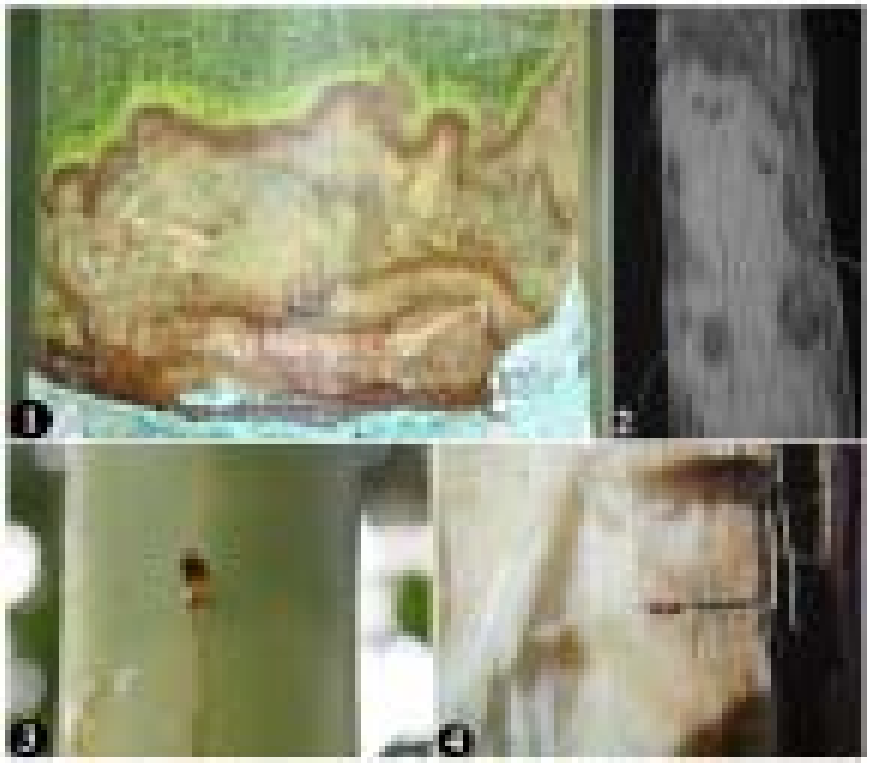

Figs 1 – 4. Symptoms of infestation of *Euplatypus parallelus* on arecanut. 1. discoloration of bark, external view, 2. discoloration in deeper layers of stem, 3. pin-hole with gummy exudation, 4. live beetle inside gallery.

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