

Carvalhoia arecae Miller & China (Miridae : Hemiptera) as a pest of Areca catechu

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Carvalhoia arecae was first described by Miller and China (1957) based on specimens collected on leaves of areca palms from S. Kanara. There appears to be, however, no record of its occurrence as a pest of areca palms nor about the type of damage it causes to the palms. The present note is to record some observations on these aspects made at the Agricultural College Farm, Vellayani, Kerala, where it has appeared as pest from 1959 onwards.

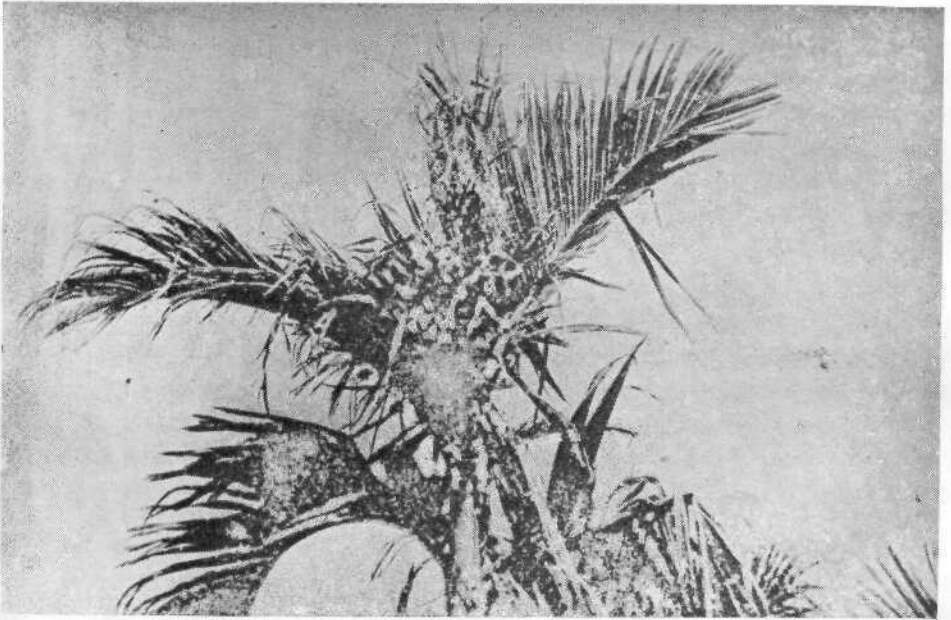
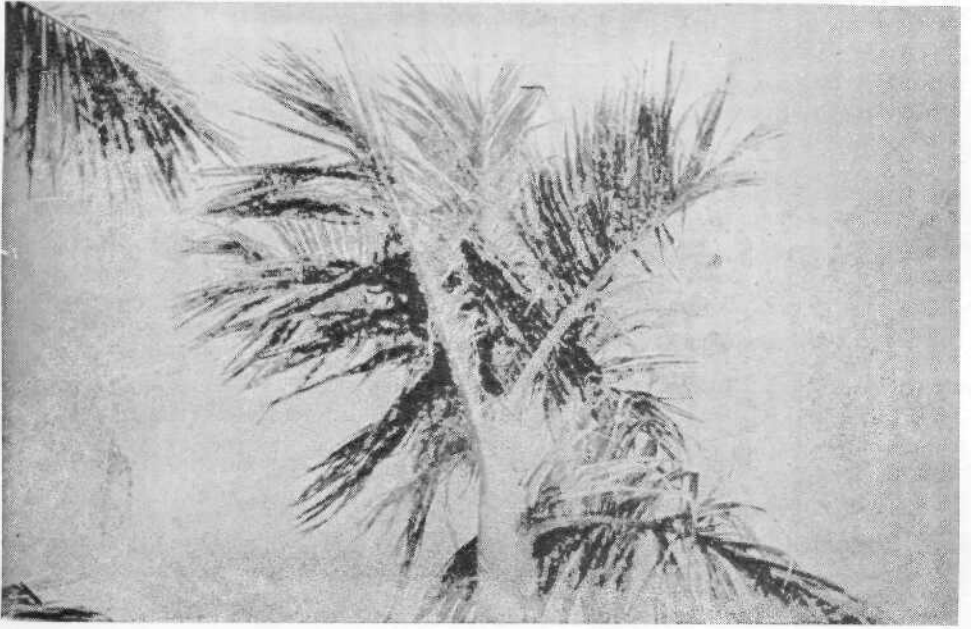
Colonies of this small red and black bug (measuring 6 mm in length and 2.5 mm in breadth) are usually found clustered within the top leaf axils. They move about on the central unopened young leaf sucking sap from the outer exposed surface. Eventually as a result of the feeding activities of the bugs, round, elongated or irregular spots, grey to black in colour, appear on the surface of the leaf buds. Often, extensive patches of dead tissues are present on the leaf buds, more so

at their tips. When a leaf bud which has been so attacked unfolds, the spots and blotches of dead tissues on it becomes quite conspicuous on the opened leaf. Agitation of the leaf by wind leads to the breaking of these spots and blotches and the ultimate shredding of the whole leaf (see plate). The attacked leaves fail to grow out fully, stand almost erect and give a stunted appearance to the plants as may be seen in the plate. In severe cases of attack most of the leaves of a plant are damaged affecting the vigour of the plant markedly.

Thanks are due to the Director, Commonwealth Institute of Entomology, London, for identifying the pest.

Reference.

Miller, N. C. E. and China, W. E. 1957. A new Genus and Species of Miridae from *Areca catechu* in South India. (hemiptera : Heteroptera), *Bull. Ent Res.*, 47 : 429-31.



Areca palms attacked by *Carvalhoia arecae* M. & C.