

Infestation of *Xyleborus fornicatus* (Coleoptera : Scolytidae) on tea in relation to timing of pruning

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to find out the feasibility of the adjustment of the pruning time to prevent the infestation of *Xyleborus fornicatus* Eichhoff on mature tea (*Camellia sinensis* (L.) O. Kuntze) plantations in North East monsoon rainy region in Sri Lanka. Two sampling methods were used to evaluate the results and it was found that both methods are equally acceptable when the gallery number as a rate of damage are considered. However, it is highlighted only by the branch sampling method that the *X. fornicatus* population arrives at a peak always during July to September either as early as the 15th month or as late as the 27th month in the pruning cycle depending on the month of prune in this region. The correlation between the monthly total tea crop and the *X. fornicatus* brood development over the pruning cycle was also shown in this study. There was sharp decline of the crop during July to September as they are dry months in the year having less flush to pluck and also due to the *X. fornicatus* infestation. Hence, it is revealed from this study that the timing of pruning cannot be performed for the management of *X. fornicatus* in tea plantations in Sri Lanka.

Keywords : *Xyleborus fornicatus*, tea plants, pruning, *Camellia sinensis*, Sri Lanka