

## South American Palm Weevil

*Rhynchophorus palmarum*

**Not known to be present in Hawai'i**

A species of snout beetle that is a significant pest of coconut, date, and oil palms. The larvae are capable of killing a palm and also serve as a pathway for disease-causing bacteria and nematodes.



Photo: Adult beetle. Bernard Dupont/via wikipedia - CC BY-SA 2.0 cabi.org



Photo: Crown damage. cisrucc.edu



### Impacts

- A huge risk to Hawaii's native and endemic palm species.
- Feeds on banana, papaya, cacao, sugar cane, coconut and other palms. Minor pest of avocado and citrus crops.
- Vectors the nematode *Bursaphelenchus cocophilus* which causes red-ring disease.
- Damage could lead to palm falling over.



### Identification

- Egg: Pearly-white, elongate-ovoid.
- Larva: Creamy-white, caterpillar-like and legless. Head is orange/brown, and can grow up to 12.7 cm (5 in) long.
- Pupa: Tough, fibrous cocoon is made from the vascular bundles of the palm after the softer tissues have been eaten away.
- Adult: Deep, dull black, about 3.3 cm (1.3 in) long and can fly.
- Larvae tunnel and feed from the top of a palm tree through the trunk; damage is often undetected until the tree dies and the crown topples.
- Feeding debris (frass) and thick white fluid may ooze from entry holes.
- Gnawing sounds can be heard within a tree when large numbers of larvae are feeding.



Photo: Eggs. Sanchez cabi.org



Photo: Larva. Sanchez cabi.org



Photo: Pupa. Sanchez cabi.org



Photo: Adult beetle. invasive.org

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# South American Palm Weevil

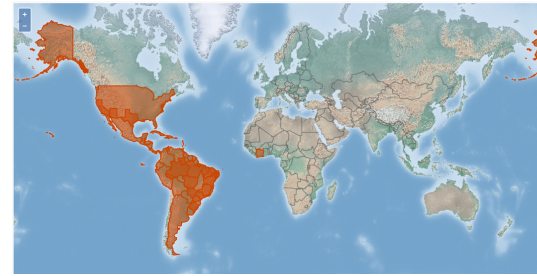
*Rhynchophorus palmarum*

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## Vectors/Commodities

- Palm plants. Spend most of its life and all stages w/in tree.
- Can also be found in leaf litter around the base of palm or green waste piles.
- May also move short distances through adult flight. Both males and females are considered strong fliers and can fly over half a mile in one flight.



Distribution. Map by cabi.org



## Distribution

- Current: Native to Mexico, Central and South America.
- The beetle is now making incursions across the southern border of the United States into California, Arizona, and Texas.



## Best Management Practices

- This species is not found in Hawaii. Prevention and early detection efforts protect Hawaii's nursery industry and environment.
- Consider sourcing options and pest distribution when purchasing plants.
- BOLO: Be on the lookout! Carefully inspect all shipments of palms for indications of South American Palm Weevil.
- Look for boreholes and crown dieback.
  - Feeding debris (frass) and thick white fluid may ooze from entry holes.
  - Gnawing sounds can be heard within a tree when large numbers of larvae are feeding.
- Report any suspect pests to [www.643pest.org](http://www.643pest.org).

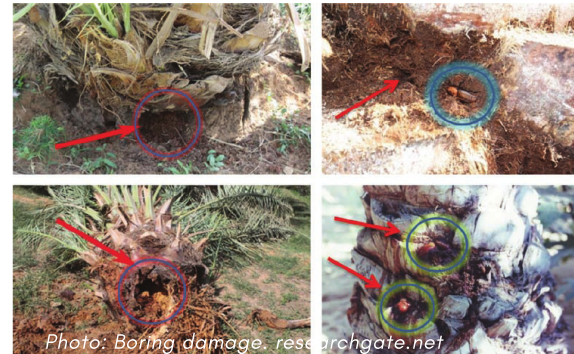


Photo: Boring damage. researchgate.net



## Selected References:

- <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/47473>
- <https://blogs.cdфа.ca.gov/Section3162/?tag=rhynchophorus-palmarum-linnaeus>

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