Record of litchi weevil, *Myllocerus discolor* (Coleoptera: Curculionidae) on litchi (*Litchi sinensis* Sonn. (Sapindaceae) from Assam

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Litchi (*Litchi sinensis* Sonn.) is considered as one of the important fruit crops in Assam. Its cultivation is gaining importance among the farmers owing to favourable agro-climatic condition of Assam. However, the crop suffers considerably due to the attack of many insect-pest in different growth stages. Incidence of insect-pests like litchi leaf curl- leaf mite (*Acerya litchi* Keifer), fruit borer (*Conopomorpha cremersella*), bark eating caterpillar (*Indarbela quadrinotata* and *I. tetraonis* walker) and shoot borer (*Chlumetia transversa* walker) etc have been reported from different parts of the world including India. (Kumar *et.al*, 2001).

During March-May 2013, a species of weevil was observed to feed on the leaves of 2 years old litchi plants in the litchi orchard maintained at Horticultural Research Station, Assam Agricultural University, Kahikuchi, Guwahati. This weevil belongs to the order Coleoptera and family Curculionidae. Important morphological characters were studied as detailed below-

- Head prognathus, snout very short and truncated, antennae capitate, 12 segmented with 10 flagellum segments, flagellar with 3 funnccular segments; frons with brown reclining hairs (setae); antennal socket deep and oblong, clypeus with a wide cleft with transparent long setae, body hairs scale like brown, deep brown; whitish and blackish in colour. Elytra with punctuations arranged in parallel lines longitudinally; mid and hind femur with spines; mid femoral spines 1 no; three hind femoral spines (biggest is the proximal), femur enlarged distally, Venter is light yellowish with iridescence; pulvilli well developed, claw highly sclerotized and two tarsal segments. The beetle was identified at the Division of Entomology, IARI, New Delhi-110012 as *Myllocerus discolor* Marshall belonging to the family Curculionidae (RRS No. 275-282/13). Adult weevils were found to cause severe damage to both matured and immature leaves of litchi. They feed on leaves, nibbling the leaves from the margins and eating away small patches of leaf lamina (Fig 1-4). Similar nature of leaf
damage by the adults of *Myllocerus* spp has been reported (Butani, 1979). Adult beetles per plant in the range of 25 -40 were recorded during the morning hours in the month of April – July 2013.

Incidence of *M. discolor* Marshall was reported from many Indian states including Assam (Ramamurthy and Ghai, 1988), but its infestation causing severe damage to litchi leaves is the first report from north east region of India. Another weevil, *M. undetus* Marshall has been reported to have a broad host range including litchi (Thomas, 2000; O’Brien et al., 2006). Likewise, incidence of *M undatus* Bohemman on different plant species from many states of India, has been reported (Marshall, 1961; Ramamurthy and Ghai, 1988; Azam, 2007; Tara et al., 2010).

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References


