

INVESTIGATIONS ON THE POTENTIALS OF
BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL METHODS IN
THE INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF
CITRUS ROOT WEEVILS IN JAMAICA

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DIONNE ORNELLA CLARKE-HARRIS

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Pesticide and Pest Research Group
Department of Life Sciences
Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences
University of the West Indies
Mona, Jamaica

ABSTRACT

Investigations on the Potentials of Biological and Cultural Methods in the Integrated Management of Citrus Root Weevils in Jamaica

Dionne Ornella Clarke-Harris

Two species of citrus root weevils (CRW), *Exophthalmus vittatus* and *E. similis*, were found feeding on, besides Citrus, *Gliricidia sepium*, *Carica papaya*, *Pimenta officinalis*, *Terminalia catappa*, *Cecropia peltata*, *Hibiscus elatus* and *H. sabdariffa*, the last three being recorded for the first time as alternate hosts of the weevils. In greenhouse experiments, the relative preference of *E. similis* for the alternate hosts was *C. peltata* > *G. sepium* > *C. papaya* > *T. catappa*, *P. officinalis*, *Ficus* spp. and *H. elatus* > *H. sabdariffa*. Larval survival however, was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher on Citrus (30.0%) than on *C. papaya* (16.3%); survival on *T. catappa* (5.9%), *Theobroma cacao* (3.4%), and *P. officinalis* (1.3%) was significantly ($P < 0.05$) less than on *C. papaya*.

Population studies indicated that the peak emergence of *E. similis* at Greenwood Farms (GF) and *E. vittatus* at United Estates (UE) was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher in April than in July/August. Correlation between adult population and rainfall was not significant ($P > 0.05$) at UE but was significant ($P = 0.0128$) at GF. Spatial distribution of CRW egg masses and adults showed no bias for inner versus peripheral trees.

Both *E. similis* and *E. vittatus* were found to have common natural enemies of their egg masses. The predators were six coccinellid species, one chrysopid, formicids and one species from the order Scolopendramorpha, while the parasitoids were *Fidiobia citri* (Platygastridae), *Aprostocetus haitiensis*, *A. gala*, *Eutetrastichus fennahi*

interviews thus providing relevant information on farmer practice on different farms.

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