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Influence of cashew farms age on the damage of *Zographus regalis* (Browning, 1776) (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae) and Termites in West of Côte d'Ivoire

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Abstract

Cashew is an important crop. This study was carried out to evaluate the influence of cashew trees age on the damage of *Zographus regalis* and termites in the west of Côte d'Ivoire. These insects damages were collected in cashew orchards (class 1:] 0, 5] years), class 2:] 5, 10] years and class 3:] 10, 15] years). Four plots of 1 ha per cashew orchards class were sampled monthly from 7 am to 11 am. The results showed that the damage rates were between 3% and 21%. The intensity attack on cashew trees was between 2 and 4 in the two regions of the west of Côte d'Ivoire. The damage rate and the intensity attack of *Zographus regalis* decrease progressively with the age of cashew orchards. However the intensity attack of termites increase progressively with the age of cashew orchards. A total of 08 species belonging to 5 genera and 5 sub-families were collected in all the study plot. In Duékoué cashew orchards, the damage rate was highest in class 3 orchards with a rate of 5.167. In the cashew orchards of Man, the highest damage rate was also observed in class 3 orchards with a rate of 2.66 in class 3 cashew orchards. The cashew trees protection with pesticides was recommended for increasing the yield and the qualities of cashew nuts.

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Introduction

The cashew tree, Anacardium occidentale (Sapindales: Anacardiaceae), is native to Brazil and was introduced into Africa by Portuguese traders in the 16th century (Johnson, 1973; Delgado and Couturier, 2014; Adeigbe et al., 2015). In Côte d'Ivoire, cashew was initially introduced in 1951 for soil preservation and reforestation in the savannah (Delgado and Couturier, 2014; Kra et al., 2017, Diabaté and Tano, 2020). Since 2000, cashew was become an important cash crop in Côte d'Ivoire. Cashew nut production was 875,000 tons (23.8% of world production) and was covering 16 million ha in 2018 (Bassett et al., 2018; Ricau, 2019). The cashew nut production in Côte d'Ivoire increased from 60,000 tons in 2000 to 875,000 tons in 2018 (Djaha et al., 2010; Ricau, 2019) and become the first Cashew producer in Africa (Diop, 2016). However, its production is threatened by several biotic factors, especially insects (Agboton et al., 2014; Diabaté and Tano, 2020).

The cashew nut yield in Côte d'Ivoire farms were lowered and were 350 kg/ha (Ricau, 2019). Despite being considered a rustic plant and well adapted to tropical conditions (Topper et al., 2001; Freire et al., 2002; Bezerra et al., 2007), significant damages have been observed on the cashew trees (Dwomoh et al., 2008; Vasconcelos et al., 2014; N'Depo et al., 2017; Diabaté and Tano, 2020). Insect pests are a major source of crop losses in many cashew-growing areas (Asogwa et al., 2009, 2011; Agboton et al., 2014). Insect pests infest its various parts including roots, stem, branches, flowers, and the pseudo-apples (Asogwa et al., 2009, 2011; Agboton et al., 2018). Most of the insects damaged the cashew crop by sucking sap, defoliation, branch girdling, stem and twig boring, and fruit and nut boring (Dwomoh et al., 2008; Vasconcelos et al., 2014; Tchetangni et al., 2019). In the west of Côte d'Ivoire, Zographus regalis and termite attacks were very important. Larvae of Z. regalis bores into tree trunks and twigs (Dwomoh et al., 2008) and termite damages were observed on the roots and on cashew trees trunks. These insects' pests become a major pest on cashew trees in the west of Côte d'Ivoire. Moreover, very little data exists on the damage of these insect pests in these regions of Côte d'Ivoire. The study aimed to evaluate the influence of cashew trees age on the damage of *Zographus regalis* and termite in the west of Côte d'Ivoire.

Material and methods

Study area

The study was carried out in two regions of the West of Côte d'Ivoire (Tonkpi and Guémon regions). Tonkpi region is located at 7°24'N and 7°33'W and Guémon region is between 7°00' and 6°50 (Fig. 1).

The study area was influenced by the subequatorial climate. The mean of annual rainfall was 1632 mm and the average annual temperature was 25 °C.

The rainy season was seven-months from April to October (Saley, 2003; Brou, 2005; Ahoussi *et al.*, 2018). These regions were an agro-ecological area which showed climatic conditions favorable for cashew cultivation. The vegetation was forests marked in places by meadows (Brou, 2005).

Experimental design

The study was conducted from January, 5 to April, 5, 2021 to evaluate the influence of cashew orchards age on *Zographus regalis* and termites damages in Tonkpi and Guemon regions of Côte d'Ivoire. These insects damages were collected in cashew orchards (class 1:] 0, 5] years), class 2:] 5, 10] years and class 3:] 10, 15] years) (Table 1). Four plots of 1 ha (10 m x 100 m) per cashew orchards class were sampled monthly from 7 am to 11 am. In each of the cashew farm, four elementary plots were delimited. Cashew trees were spaced at 8 x 6 m. Some parts of cashew plants destroyed by the insects were also recorded. The attacked trunks, branches, and twigs were counted per tree and marked so that they were no longer recounted.

Evaluation of Z. regalis and termite damage

The damage estimate was obtained from the number of trees attacked, by the number of branches attacked and by the number of twigs attacked.



Fig. 1. Location of data collection sites in west of Côte d'Ivoire (Duékoué, Man).

The damage rates as the percentage of cashew trees attached by *Z. regalis* were calculated using the following formula:

$$Ta = \frac{\text{Npax 100}}{\text{Ntp}} \tag{1}$$

with:

Ta = Damage rates of *Z. regalis* per plot (%) Npa = Number of plants attacked by *Z. regalis* Ntp = Total number of sampled plants per plot

The intensity of attack of cashew trunks per cashew tree sampled was evaluated by using the following formula:

$$I = \frac{Nta}{Ntps}$$
(2)

Nta: Number of *Z. regalis* damage per cashew trunk attacked

Ntpa: Total number of sampled plants attacked by *Z*. *regalis* per plot

Identification of termites

Collected individuals were observed and identified down to the genus level in the laboratory under a binocular magnifying glass, using the identification keys of Sjöstedt (1926), Bouillon and Mathot (1965), Harris (1966a; 1966b); Sands (1965), and Ruelle (1970). After identification, each genus was classified in its trophic group (fungus-growers, grass-feeders and wood-feeders).

Data analysis

Data of the damage rates of *Zographus regalis* and termite, and the intensity attacks of *Zographus regalis* on cashew trees were analyzed using SPSS software, version 22.0. Data of damage rate and of intensity attack were subjected to an analysis of

variance (ANOVA main effect) and the means discriminated with the Tukey test (HSD) with a probability of 5 %.

Results

Influence of cashew orchards age on the damage of Zographus regalis

Zographus regalis caused serious damage on cashew trees. The larva bores into tree trunks, branches, and twigs. The attack of Z. regalis causes a significant loss of the sap of the cashew trees (Fig. 2).

Damage rate of zographus regalis on cashew trees The damage rate of *Z. regalis* on cashew orchards was between 10% and 21% in Duekoue cashew orchards. The damage rate of *Z. regalis* recorded in cashew orchards of class 1 (] 0, 5] years) was higher (20.118%). The damage rate decrease progressively with the age of cashew orchards.

It was 17.145 in cashew orchards of class 2 (] 5, 10] years) and was 10.967% in cashew orchards of class 3 (] 10, 15] years) (p=0.034) (Table 2).

Table 1. Age of cashew orchards classes.	
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N° of class	Age of cashew farm	Number of farm sampling
Class 1]0; 5]	4
Class 2]5; 10]	4
Class 3]10; 15]	4

In Man, The highest damage rate of *Z. regalis* on cashew trees was in cashew orchards of class 1 (8.3%) and the lowest damage was in cashew orchards of class 3. The damage rate decreases also progressively with the age cashew orchards. In cashew orchards of

class 2, the damage of *Z. regalis* was 5.167%. There was a significant difference on *Z. regalis* damage in cashew orchads classes (p=0.001). However the damage rates were lowed in Guémon region (Duékoué) than those of Tonkpi region (Table 2).

Table 2. Damage rate of *Zographus regalis* attack on cashew trees.

Habitat	Damage rate (%) ± SE			
	Duékoué	Man		
Class 1	20.118 b ± 2.943	8.300 c ± 0.506		
Class 2	17.145 ab ± 2.943	5.167 b ± 0.869		
Class 3	10.967 a ± 000	3.100 a ± 0.363		
p-value	0.034	0.001		

SE. Standard error

The means assigned to the same letter within the same column are not significantly different for the 5% Tukey test (HSD).

Intensity attack of Z. regalis

The intensity attack of *Z. regalis* in Duekoue was between 2 to 4 damages per cashew tree attacked. The intensity attacks of *Z. regalis* decreases progressively with the age of cashew orchards. The intensity attack of *Z. regalis* values were 3.333, 2.667, 2.00 in cashew orchards of class 1, 2 and 3, respectively (Fig. 3). In Man, the intensity attack of *Z. regalis* decreases progressively with the age and were between 2 to 3. The intensity attack was higher on cashew orchards of class 1 (2.776) and was higher in cashew orchards of class 3 (2.045). The intensity attack of *Z. regalis* was 2.470 in cashew orchards of class 2 (Fig. 3).

Influence of cashew orchards age on the damage of termites

A total of o8 species of termites belonging to o8 genera and 5 sub-families were collected in all the

study plot. The Macrotermitinae family was the most diverse with 3 genera of termite pests (Table 3). Termites harvested at two trophic groups, fungusgrowers and wood-feeders. The wood-feeders group present with 5 genera were the most diversified group (Table 3).

In Man (Tonkpi region), a total of 4 species of termites were collected in all 3 classes. Class 3

recorded the highest diversity with 3 genera of termites collected. Class 1 recorded only 1 termite genus (Table 3).

In Duékoué (Guémon region), a total of 6 species of termites were collected in all 3 classes. The Class 3 also recorded the greatest diversity with 5 species of termites. The Class 1 recorded 2 species of termites (Table 3).

Table 3. Genus of termite pests of cashew trees collected in the study areas.

Sub-Familly/ genera	FG		DUEKOUE	Ε		MAN	
		Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Coptotermitinae							
Coptotermes intermedius (Silvestri)	w			*			
Rhinotermitinae							
Schedorhinotermes lamanianus (Sjöstedt)	w			*			
Macrotermitinae							
Ancistrotermes cavithorax (Sjöstedt)	f	*	*		*	*	
Macrotermes subhyalinus (Rambur)	f						*
Odontotermes pauperans (Silvestri)	f		*	*			
Nasutitermitinae							
Nasutitermes sp	w			*			
Termitinae							
Amitermes evuncifer (Silvestri)	w						*
Microcerotermes fuscotibialis (Sjöstedt)	w	*	*	*		*	*
Total		2	3	5	1	2	3

w: Wood-feeders, f: fungus-growers.

Termite's attack several parts of the cashew trees such as the roots, the stems and the branches and causes the death of cashew trees attacked (Fig. 4). The lowest damage rate of termite attacks occurred in Man cashew farms. The damage rate of termite attacks was higher in Duékoué cashew farms. In the two region, the damage of termite increase progressively with the age of cashew orchards.

Table 4. Damage rate of termites attack on cashew trees.

Habitat	Damage rate (%) ± SE			
	Duékoué	Man		
Class 1	1.000 a ± 0.00	1.333 a ± 0.363		
Class 2	4.133 b ± 1.637	2.000 b ± 0.000		
Class 3	5.167 b ± 1.637	2.667 b ± 0.637		
p-value	0.0001	0.001		

SE. Standard error.

The means assigned to the same letter within the same column are not significantly different for the 5% Tukey test (HSD).

In Duékoué cashew orchards, the damage rate was 1, 4.133 and 5.167 in cashew orchards of class 1, class 2 and class 3, respectively (p=0001). In Man cashew

orchards, the damage rate was 1.33, 2 and 2.667 in cashew orchards of class 1, class 2 and class 3, respectively (p=0.001) (Table 4).



Fig. 2. Impact of the damages of Zographus regalis on various organs of cashew tree (branch (a); Trunk (b)).

Discussion

In this study, damage of *Z. regalis* on the part of cashew trees was recorded in the cashew farms of Guémon (Duékoué) and Tonkpi (Man). Larvae of *Z. regalis* bore into cashew tree trunks, branches, and twigs caused serious damage on cashew trees. Similar results were reported by many authors such as Dwomoh *et al.* (2008), Asogwa *et al.* (2011), and N'Depo *et al.* (2017). The damage rate of *Z. regalis* recorded on cashew trees in the two regions of the west of Côte d'Ivoire were between 3% and 21%.

These damage rate decrease progressively with the age of cashew orchards.



Fig. 3. Intensity attacks of Zographus regalis on cashew trees.

The highest damage rate on cashew were recorded in young cashew orchards and were lower in old cashew orchards. Furthermore, the intensity attack of *Z. regalis* was decreased progressively with the age of cashew orchards. Larvae of *Z. regalis* bore into cashew tree trunks, branches, and twigs caused serious damage on cashew trees. In fact, the perforation of the stems and branches of cashew trees causes a significant loss of sap. Thus, *Z. regalis* reduces photosynthesis. The mineral nutrition of the plant and the synthesis of organic matter accumulated in the fruits were distrubed. Consequently, the cashew nuts produced were small and consequently the yield of cashew orchards is reduced. Similar results were reported by Dwomoh *et al.* (2008) which showed that *Z. regalis* damage was higher on mature trees.

This insect pest greatly reduce both development and quality of the produce of cashew trees.



Fig. 4. Impact of termite attack on cashew trees (a. attack of *Microcerotermes* sp; b: attack of *Macrotermes* sp; c: Deep tree due to termite attack).

The results indicate that the damage of termite decrease progressively with the age of cashew orchards. Termites attack the roots, the stems and the branches of cashew trees and caused the death of cashew trees attacked. Consequently the yield of cashew orchards is reduced. The termite pest species harvested in this study belong to the fungus-growers and wood-feeders groups. These two trophic groups are recognized as the main pests of rubber trees (Apkesse et al., 2019; Hidayat et al., 2018) and mango trees (Coulibaly et al., 2014). They attack trees because of their diet mainly based on cellulose and their need for water. Tra Bi et al., 2019 also showed that Cocoa trees were most prone to termite attack. The observations of Gbenyedji et al., (2016) also showed that most of the termite species responsible

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for tree damage on the Lomé campus belong to the wood-feeders and fungus-growers groups.

Conclusion

Zographus regalis and the termite caused serious damage on cashew trees. Their damage rates were between 3% and 21%. Zographus regalis larva bores into tree trunks and twigs of cashew trees. The intensity attacks of Zographus regalis on cashew trees were between 2 and 4 in the two regions of the west of Côte d'Ivoire. The damage and the intensity attack of Zographus regalis decrease progressively with the age of cashew orchards. The attack of termites increase progressively with the age of cashew orchards. A total of 8 species belonging to 5 genera and 5 sub-families were collected in all the study plot.

In Duekoue cashew orchards, the damage rate was highest in class 3 orchards with a rate of 5.167. In the cashew orchards of Man, the highest damage rate was also observed in class 3 orchards with a rate of 2.667 in class 3 cashew orchards. Plant's protection with pesticides was recommended for increasing the yield and the qualities of cashew nuts in cashew farms.

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