

POPULATION SAMPLING OF PEST AND BENEFICIAL INSECTS OF RICE IN BATTICALOA DISTRICT

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A survey of rice fields in Batticaloa and Amparai districts during Yala 1975 indicated relatively high densities of planthopper and leafhopper complexes. The present paper reports the results of an insect population survey carried out in a rice field at Karadianaru in Batticaloa district, during Yala 1981.

From the 5th week after planting, the rice root weevil and *Scotinophora lurida* were the predominant pests observed. The rice root weevil reached a peak of 0.8 insects per 10 sweeps in the 9th week and *S. lurida* reached the maximum 2 weeks later, with 1.1 insects per 10 sweeps. Both populations declined rapidly to 0 in the 13th week. Two coccinellid species were observed in fairly low numbers, but reached a peak of 1.2 insects per 10 sweeps in the 15th week. Planthoppers and leafhoppers were virtually nil during the entire Yala season.

The present survey indicates that the complex of pest species of rice in Karadianaru differs markedly from that reported in Amparai district and adjacent areas in Batticaloa district along the sea coast, with respect to planthopper and leafhopper populations. A major factor contribution to this difference appears to be the absence of staggered planting of rice in Karadianaru and adjoining areas.