



Outbreak of an emerging cocoa pest *Pseudotheraptus devastans* Distant (Heteroptera: Coreidae) in the Haut-Sassandra Central-West of Côte d'Ivoire

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Submitted 14/07/2026, Published online on 30/09/2026 in the <https://www.m.elewa.org/journals/journal-of-applied-biosciences-about-jab/> <https://doi.org/10.35759/JABs.224.6>

ABSTRACT

Objectives: The stink bug *Pseudotheraptus devastans* causes damage to cocoa plantations in Côte d'Ivoire. This damage reduces farmers' production. This study was conducted to determine periods of high infestation of these stink bugs in the Haut-Sassandra central-western region of Côte d'Ivoire.

Methodology and Results: The infestation of these stink bugs was assessed by sampling using the knock down technique. This technique consisted in spreading sheets of 16 m² in cocoa trees infested by the *P. devastans* bug. The cocoa trees infested were treated with a high dose of a registered insecticide. Dead *P. devastans* bugs were counted on the sheets 5 hours after treatment. The results revealed the presence of *P. devastans* in the cocoa plantations of Haut-Sassandra. These pests represented on average 6.35 ± 0.28 , 5.65 ± 0.07 and 5.10 ± 0.17 for 12 cocoa trees in Zoukougbeu, Gonaté, and Boguedia. The *P. devastans* population curve from 2022 to 2024 revealed that these pests are significant in March, April, August, and September of each year.

Conclusion and application of results: This study has determined the importance of *P. devastans* in cocoa plantations in the Haut-Sassandra region. The population explosion of *Pseudotheraptus devastans* in the Haut-Sassandra region of central-western Côte d'Ivoire will allow for recommendations regarding phytosanitary treatments. Treatments applied to cocoa plantations during July–August and December–January effectively controls this pest in Haut-Sassandra.

Keyword : Bug, *Pseudotheraptus devastans*, Cocoa tree, Côte d'Ivoire.