

Lagochirus araneiformis (Spider Long-horned Beetle)

Order: Coleoptera (Beetles)

Class: Insecta (Insects)

Phylum: Arthropoda (Arthropods)



Fig. 1. Spider long-horned beetle, *Lagochirus araneiformis*.

[<https://www.flickr.com/photos/cdesoto/23220217439>, downloaded 18 November 2016]

TRAITS. *Lagochirus araneiformis* is a species of longhorn beetle, which can reach a length of 20-28mm. Males are reddish brown (Fig. 1), with the lateral spine of the thorax very prominent, and their huge antennae protrude five to six segments beyond the body (Fig. 2). The legs are powerful and mottled brown with dark spots. Females are similar, but their antennae are only a little longer than the body.

DISTRIBUTION. The species is found around the Caribbean and South America with the addition of certain parts of Central America such as Mexico, Ecuador, and Honduras.

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY. *Lagochirus araneiformis* are nocturnal, and live on land near trees as they feed on plant material. They reside in decaying plant material as well. They are capable of flying, and the antennae serve as the essential olfactory organs, and are exceptionally sensitive in locating suitable host plants, often locating them over extreme distances. Larvae can be found feeding in the bark of cassava stems toward the base of the plant as they drill into the lignified area

of the stem. As a result, *Lagochirus araneiformis* reduces the economic yield in cassava production. They also ingest sugar cane as a secondary food source. Females lay an average of 150 eggs; females can lay eggs without copulation, however, they are infertile.

APPLIED BIOLOGY. *Lagochirus araneiformis* feeds on cassava which reduces the economic yield in countries which cultivate cassava, therefore it is seen as a pest. It has not yet been assessed for the IUCN Red List.

REFERENCES

- Horn, G. H. 1880. Notes on Some Genera of Cerambycidae with Descriptions of New Species. *Transactions of the American Entomological Society and Proceedings of the Entomological Section of the Academy of Natural Sciences*, **8**: 115–138.
- Hovore, F.T, and Monne. 2002. Checklist of the Cerambycidae of Ecuador.
<http://www.cerambycoidea.com/titles/hovore2002.pdf>
- Gorton, L. E. and Chemsak, J.A. 1995. The Cerambycidae of North America. Berkeley: University of California.



Fig. 2. Dorsal and ventral views of a male *Lagochirus araneiformis*.

[<http://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/269894-Lagocheirus-araneiformis> downloaded 25 October 2016]