

**Bito, Darren. \* Caterpillars colonizing *Spathodea campanulata* (Bignoniaceae), an alien tree in Papua New Guinea lowlands.** Parataxonomists training Center, P.O.Box 604, Madang. Email: ento\_darrenbito@yahoo.com

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*Spathodea campanulata*, an alien tree native to Africa, ranks among the most abundant woody plants in secondary forest plots in the Madang vicinity. Lepidopteran herbivores have been sampled from *S. campanulata* from Oct 2002 to April 2004 resulting in 840 reared specimens representing 10 moth families. The three dominant moth species in the sample, *Hyblaea puera*, *Archerontia lachesis* and *Psilogramma menephron* (57, 25.7, 6.57% respectively, of all individuals) have also been recorded on the *S. campanulata* in its native range (i.e. Africa and parts of Asia). Commonly occurring species were compared to sampled populations of the same species on other native and alien host plants. While individuals were numerically quite abundant on *Spathodea*, other hosts plants for these same moth species contributed less than 25% of the total individuals when all hosts, native and introduced, were included in the comparison. The caterpillar community on *S. campanulata* included mostly generalists, feeding on other plant families and a small proportion of specialists. The caterpillar community associated with *S. campanulata* has attained a species richness and dominance structure similar to those on native host plants in New Guinea in the short time since the introduction of its host.



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