Infestation of silver oak tree (\textit{Grevillea robusta}) by \textit{Indarbela} sp.

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\textit{Grevillea robusta}, commonly known as the southern silky oak or silky oak, or Australian silver oak, is the largest species in the genus \textit{Grevillea} of the family Proteaceae. It is a fast-growing evergreen tree, between 18–35 m (59–115 ft) tall, with dark green delicately dented bipinnate leaves.

Silver oak is generally grown in coffee plantations as shade trees and as wind breaks elsewhere. Coffee is the second important commodity in the world trade after petroleum products. Commercial production of coffee comes from two species, \textit{viz.} \textit{Coffee arabica} and \textit{C. canephora} popularly known as Arabica coffee and Robusta coffee. There are approximately 250,000 coffee growers in India.

The bark eating caterpillar (\textit{Indarbela quadrinotata}, Walker, 1856.) is a serious pest of a large number of plant types throughout Asia (Beeson, 1941). Plants affected by this caterpillar include fruit trees such as mango, citrus, guava, jujube, litchi, cashew and forest trees. Caterpillars are 50-60 mm and have pale brown bodies with dark brown heads. They eat the bark and bore inside the tree, feeding for 9-11 months (Nair and Mathew, 1988). Several caterpillars may attack the same tree at different locations with serious injury to the bark and the death of small branches. Early stages of damage are not easily recognised or highly visible. The caterpillar eat the underlying layer of the bark and then excreta forms baggy tunnels externally visible. As the bark dies symptoms of the caterpillar damage is prominent. The holes left on the trunk may lead to infestation by other insects or plant pathogens. Affected trees also break at the points of attack. A severe infestation may arrest the growth of the tree and the fruiting capacity.

On 26th December 2014 the high infestation of \textit{Indarbela} in Salem district of Tamil Nadu, South India was found. There were at least 4-5 borers/ tree. The affected trees showed weakening and retarded growth.
References:


![Infestation of silver oak tree (Grevillea robusta) by Indarbela sp.](image)