

# **Bagworm Infestation and Natural Control by Red Weaver Ants, *Oecophylla smaragdina***

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*During a recent large outbreak of bagworms, *Metisa plana*, aerial photographs taken by an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) some green spots of almost non-damaged palm canopy were discovered amongst the thousands of badly damaged palms. With assistance from the plantation personnel, infield checking was carried out on two green spots. Small feeding holes were observed on some fronds. The presence of nests of red weaver ants indicated their deterring impact on bagworm infestation. In other words, good effective natural control of *M. plana* was due to predation by weaver ants. Habitat manipulation and specific measures are required to enhance red weaver ant population (indicated by nests) and the nest distribution to all palms are important for both natural and biological control. Consideration is needed to deal with the negative aspects of having red weaver ants on harvesters and oil palm in order to harmonise the implementation of biological control.*

*Keywords: Oil palm, bagworm infestation, natural control, red weaver ants.*