

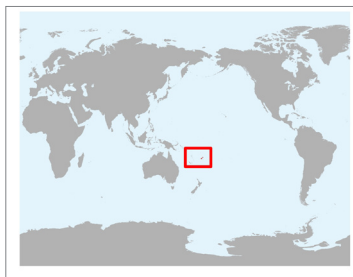


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Geographical range

Amazing Species: Fijian Giant Long-horned Beetle

The **Fijian Giant Long-horned Beetle**, *Xixuthrus heros*, has not yet been officially evaluated for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It is the world's second largest beetle (length 14-15cm) and is endemic to the Fiji Islands. The larva (locally known as “yavato”) are sacred to several tribes in Fiji's Namosi province (Viti Levu), and may be eaten only by the village high chief. Destruction of the larva can be taken as an insult to the chief.

Beetles in the genus *Xixuthrus* apparently prefer lowland rainforests, which are rapidly disappearing due to logging and clearance for agriculture. In addition to collection of the larva for food, the size and extreme rarity of the Fijian Giant Long-horned Beetle has made it highly sought after amongst beetle collectors with specimens commanding very high prices. The scarcity of this beetle may be due to its life history characteristics – the larva take 12 years to reach maturity.

Lack of knowledge regarding extant populations, specific host-plant associations, and distribution is currently hampering attempts to protect this remarkable beetle. A Darwin Initiative collaborative project between the University of Sussex and the University of the South Pacific has been conducting surveys to help determine the status of this species.

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