

Forest Pests

Invasive Plants and Insects of Maryland

Invasive plants and insects can be problematic for forest landowners. From vines that take over disturbed areas, forest edges, and tree canopies to insects that defoliate and girdle trees, these pests not only decimate the natural ecosystem, they are difficult to control and can be expensive to eradicate. This informational sheet discusses the identification and guidelines for dealing with the insect commonly known as Asian longhorned beetle.

Asian Longhorned Beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis* (Motschulsky))



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DESCRIPTION

Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) is a black and white insect from the Beetle (*Coleoptera: Cerambycidae*) family. Adult beetles are bullet shaped, about 1-1 ½ inches long and are shiny black with white spots and very long striped antennae. ALB has a one year life cycle that starts when adult females lay eggs in the bark of the trees in the spring or summer. The eggs hatch and the larvae tunnel into the trees and feed on the living tissue throughout the fall and winter. The following spring the larvae emerge from the tree as adults, where they remain active until the early fall. Infested trees are essentially girdled and killed over time from the damage sustained from larval feeding.

ORIGIN & SPREAD

ALB entered the U.S. in 1996 in Brooklyn, NY. It was determined by USDA officials that it entered inside solid wood packing material from China. In 1998, it was discovered around Chicago, IL. Despite education efforts and quarantine orders around infested areas by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), ALB has since been found in Worcester, MA and Sacramento, CA. Because ALB spends most of its life cycle inside of wood, accidental spread of the insect has occurred.



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ALB is an insect of great concern because of the diversity of host trees it can attack. ALB is known to infest maples (including boxelder), birches, buckeye, elms, horsechestnut, and willows. Other species also have been infested and a complete list of species has not been compiled. The environmental and economical impact of a widespread ALB infestation is estimated to be in the billions, especially given that the only effective means of eradicating the insect is to remove the infested trees and chip or burn them up.



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SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Looking for signs and symptoms of ALB can be easier than finding the beetle itself. For forest landowners, it is important to identify stressed or dying trees. Canopy dieback and epicormic branching (small branches sprouting from the trunk) are symptoms of trees that are stressed. Oval or round pits may be present on the trees where female beetles have made niches to lay eggs. These niches may also be oozing sap. Other signs include round exit holes in the stem or branches where adult beetles may have emerged, or the accumulation of coarse sawdust at the base of the stem or start of branches where the larvae are tunneling into the tree.

Note: At the time of printing, Asian longhorned beetle had not been found in Maryland. However, if you find it on your property, please contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture immediately at 410-841-5920.



Pennsylvania DCNR, Forestry Archive, Bugwood.org

REFERENCES

USDA APHIS Pest Alert: Asian Longhorned Beetle. 2008. NA-PR-01-99GEN.
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