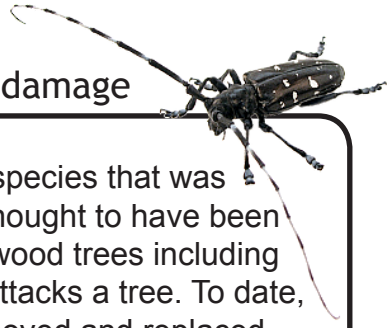
Pest Alert: Learn to recognize Asian longhorned beetle damage



Asian longhorned beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*, "ALB") is an invasive species that was discovered in Worcester, MA in August of 2008. This wood-boring beetle, thought to have been introduced to the USA via wood packing material from China, attacks hardwood trees including maple, birch, willow, poplar and elm. There is no cure for this pest once it attacks a tree. To date, more than 4000 infested trees have been found, and all will have to be removed and replaced.

The damage caused by ALB can be difficult to detect when trees are still in leaf, even for experienced surveyors. During fall and winter, the damage to the trunk and branches of trees is much easier to see. Birders, cross country skiers, hikers, or anyone spending time outdoors this fall and winter can help protect the state from Asian longhorned beetle by learning to recognize the signs of an ALB infestation:

- Try to figure out what kind of tree you are looking at. ALB likes hardwood trees, particularly maple, but stays away from oak and cherry. It does not attack conifers like pine or spruce.
- Asian longhorned beetle adults lay their eggs in pits in the bark of the tree. Egg-laying sites, or "oviposition pits," are ¾ inch across, and look similar to a bite taken out of an apple.
- The exit holes that the adults leave as they emerge from the tree are about ⅜ inch in diameter, and are perfectly round.
- If you see what looks like an exit hole and it can easily be reached, try to fit the eraser end of a pencil into the hole. If it doesn't go in at least one inch deep, it's not ALB.
- ALB typically leaves exit holes spread out across a tree, leaving room for each larva to develop. Series of holes together in a line are often caused by woodpeckers or sapsuckers.

Wood from a heavily infested maple tree in Worcester, MA. (Photo: P. Douglass)

Oviposition pits and exit hole, approx. actual size. (Photo: J. Forman Orth)

Fresh oviposition pit (top) and older pit that has begun to heal over (bottom). (Photos: P. Douglass and M. Bohne)

Report any suspicious tree damage to http://massnrc.org/pests/alb

Or call the toll-free ALB hotline: 1-866-702-9938.

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Source: The Massachusetts Introduced Pests Outreach Project (http://www.massnrc.org/pests). Last updated: 12/2008