

Exotic Species Alert: Emerald Ash Borer

The Beetle

In 2002, the Emerald Ash Borer, an exotic beetle from Asia that feeds on ash trees, was found in southern Michigan. It is currently found in several counties in Michigan and Ohio, and in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. The adult beetle is slender, metallic green, and approximately ¼ to ½ inch long. The larvae are cream colored, flattened, and approximately 1 inch long.



In Michigan, there is only one generation per year. The adults emerge through D-shaped exit holes in the bark in June through August. After mating, the females lay eggs in bark crevices on the trunk and branches. The larvae hatch and tunnel through the bark where they feed on the inner wood. The larvae make S-shaped, winding feeding tunnels that interrupt the nutrient and water transport of the tree. Larvae over-winter and pupate to adults the following year in late April and May.



The Signs and Symptoms

Signs of the beetle are jagged holes made by woodpecker feeding, D-shaped exit holes on the trunk or branches, and S-shaped feeding tunnels filled with fine, saw-dust excrement under the bark. Symptoms include canopy dieback, cracks in the bark 2-5 inches long, and sprouting from the tree trunk.



What can you do?

Although this beetle has not been found in South Carolina, it can be moved from infested areas through movement of nursery stock, unprocessed ash products, and firewood. A statewide survey is being conducted by the South Carolina Forestry Commission to monitor for this pest. Your assistance in looking for declining or dead ash trees, and signs and symptoms of Emerald Ash Borers will be very valuable in this effort.



Who to Contact?

If you notice any signs, symptoms, dead, or declining ash trees, please contact the South Carolina Forestry Commission Insect and Disease Staff (Andy Boone (803) 896-8814, Laurie Reid (803) 896-8830, or Vincent Cannarella (803) 896-8862) or your local Forestry Commission office.

For more information, please see the USDA Pest Alert Emerald Ash Borer (NA-PR-02-04) at: http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/pest_al/eab/eab.htm or visit: <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/eab/index.html>