The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Asks Residents To Watch For Asian Longhorned Beetles

New Haven, CT-August 18, 2008

The Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) (*Anoplophora glabripennis*) is an invasive insect from China that attacks and kills many healthy hardwood trees, including maple, boxelder, birches, elms, horsechestnut, poplars, and willow. This beetle is a threat to our nursery, maple syrup, and forest product industries. If established, ALB would cause severe environmental and aesthetic damage to our urban trees, forests, and parks. ALB has been present in Brooklyn, New York, parts of Long Island, and in northern New Jersey for a number of years. The recent discovery of the beetle in Worcester, Massachusetts, increases the risk to Connecticut's trees. Early detection of infestations and rapid response are crucial to successful eradication of the beetle. "Over several years, we have been conducting surveys for ALB in southeastern Connecticut because of its presence in nearby Queens, New York", said Dr. Kirby Stafford, State Entomologist at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), "additional help in looking for this beetle is important, particularly since its discovery is so near our northern border". CT DEP foresters, Cooperative Extension, Tree Wardens, and others are already assisting CAES in keeping an eye out for the beetle.

The adult ALB is ¾ to 1 ½ inches long, glossy black with white spots on the back. There are distinctive black and white bands on each segment of the long antennae. This beetle is often confused with our native Whitespotted Sawyer, which is bronzy-black with smaller or no white spots and no distinctive white bands on the antennae. Good quality photographs of suspect beetles or tree damage can be sent to CAES.StateEntomologist@po.state.ct.us or call Dr. Stafford at (203) 974-8485. According to Dr. Stafford, "we get a number of submissions of Whitespotted Sawyer beetles, but that is fine as it means people are looking for ALB. We appreciate that. However, live insects or wood samples should not be mailed or brought to us as ALB can readily escape many containers and spread the infestation. Our inspectors can come out to a suspect site to make identifications." Beetles can be killed by freezing them for two days and shown to inspectors.

On infested trees, females will make rust-colored holes where she lays her eggs. The large half-inch or more well-defined holes (sometimes with sap flowing out of the trunks and branches) mark where one beetle exited the tree. It is very important that any trees detected with signs of ALB (exit holes, egg sites, running sap) or life stages of the beetle be immediately reported to CAES or the USDA-APHIS-Plant Pest Quarantine office in Wallingford, CT. Our two agencies have the state and federal statutory responsibility, respectively, for dealing with plant pests like ALB. Dr. Stafford says "do take pictures; collect notes that may help with identification of an infestation, and report insects or damage to us. We can determine if the insect is the Asian longhorned beetle or some other species and respond accordingly". U.S. Forest Service, USDA-APHIS-PPQ identification fact sheets, and additional information on what to do about suspect invasive insects are available on the CAES website (www.ct.gov/caes).