

Bronze Birch Borer



Description:

The adult borer is deep green/bronze, about 6-12mm. Long, and cylindrical shaped. The front of the head is green in the male and bronze in the female. Full-grown larvae are about 25mm. long, slender, flattened, and have two spines on the posterior end.

Host:

It colonizes and kills weakened or injured birches, especially white barked species such as European White Birch and Paper Birch. The only common landscape birch with resistance to the borer is River Birch.

Symptoms:

The primary symptom of bronze birch borer infestation is dieback of the uppermost branches of the trees.

When this is noticed, the bark should be inspected for the presence of narrow, raised areas in an S-shaped configuration and D shaped exit holes. If present, the infestation must be dealt with immediately.

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Photo by D.G. Nielsen



Photo by G. Heaton

Above from left to right: Swellings or bumps formed where a tree has healed over a gallery of the bronze birch borer. Larva of the bronze birch borer

Life Cycle:

Adults emerge in late May or early June and continue until August. They feed on leaves for about three weeks before laying eggs. Eggs are deposited beneath loose flakes of bark and where branches join the trunk. Young larvae bore thru the bark into the cambium layer. There they excavate galleries between the bark and the wood. Mature larvae construct oblong cells in the wood that they over winter in and pupate in the spring.

Control:

The most important control strategy is maintaining tree vitality. Bronze birch borers are not a serious threat to healthy, vigorous trees. Contact local county extension agents for site-specific treatment dates and a list of registered insecticides. You may also contact Cincinnati Urban Forestry.

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PARKS