

A New Threat is on the Way

A growing threat in southern Ontario can wreck havoc in Muskoka if it finds its way to the area. Yet another exotic species, the Asian longhorned beetle, has entered Canada and that spells trouble for the forestry industry.

The Asian longhorned beetle, *Anoplophora glabripennis*, is a native of northeast Asia and is considered a pest of hardwood trees in China.

The beetle came to North America by boring into trees used in the manufacture of cargo crating in China. Upon arrival, the beetles emerge and move to local host trees to feed and complete their life cycles.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is responsible for preventing the entry and spread of pests such as the Asian longhorned beetle under the *Plant Protection Act*.

The agency has prevented the establishment of the beetle since it was first found in packing materials four to six years ago; however, an infestation was discovered last month in the Woodbridge area near Toronto.

The only way to get rid of an infestation of the beetle is to cut down all host trees within a 300-metre radius of those where the beetles are found. This results in the destruction of a large number of healthy trees.

Previous infestations in New York, Chicago and Seattle have resulted in the removal and destruction of over 5000 trees and costing millions of dollars.

A serious threat

The Asian longhorned beetle is very destructive, attacking and killing healthy trees. With no known natural enemies in Canada and an appetite for a majority of the deciduous trees found here, the Asian longhorned beetle is a serious threat.

The beetle has a preference for all species of maples, as well as elm, ash, poplar, alder and willow. If left unchecked, the beetle could wipe out large areas of forest all across Ontario.

Asian longhorned beetle larvae feed within the trunk and limbs of trees and eventually riddle the trees with holes, causing them to die. Adult beetle will feed on leaves, bark and shoots, causing considerable damage to the tree.

Description:

- Large shiny black body 20-35 mm long and 7-12 mm wide; with up to 20 white dots.
- Antennae longer than the body with 11 segments; each segment is black with a whitish ring at the base.
- Six black legs tinged with a whitish colour.
- Full grown larvae can reach 50 mm in length.

Infested trees are also prone to secondary attack from other insects and diseases. In some situations, mature trees may be killed in one or two growing seasons.

Is my tree infested?

Some of the signs and symptoms of a tree attacked by the Asian longhorned beetle include:

- **Emerging adult signs** – the emerging adult beetles will chew their way out of the tree, leaving large (9-11 mm) round holes anywhere on the tree, including branches, trunk and exposed roots.
- **Egg laying** – oval-shaped wounds can be found on the tree where the female beetles have chewed through the bark to lay their eggs. These wounds may also produce dripping sap.
- **Feeding damage by adults** – adult beetles feed on the leaves, bark and branch tips.
- **Feeding damage by larvae** – coarse sawdust may be found at the base of trees and where the branches connect to the trunk as a result of larvae feeding and chewing the tree.

Yellowing foliage and premature leaf drop are also signs that the beetle may be present.

Anyone who finds an Asian longhorned beetle or sees signs of infestation should contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at 1-800-442-2342. For more information and to see photos of the beetle and signs of infested trees, visit the CFIA website at www.inspection.gc.ca.