

Asian Long-Horned Beetle

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Be on the lookout for this new tree-killer!

Asian long-horned beetles — you've probably seen a lot about them in the news recently. So far, we haven't found them in Wisconsin, but we need your help watching for them. If you don't find the answers to your questions here, please visit one of the web sites listed or call us. And thanks for your help.

Where did Asian long-horned beetles come from?

Asian long-horned beetles are native to China and Korea. They arrived in the United States in wooden packing crates carrying merchandise from China. As trade with China continues to grow, this is likely to be a continuing problem.

What do they look like?

The adult beetles have large bodies, up to 1½ inches long, and their antennae are 1½ to 2½ times their body length. They are shiny jet-black with white spots, and their antennae have very distinctive black and white bands. There are other insects that resemble these beetles. The best thing to do if you find an insect that looks like an Asian long-horned beetle is to call one of the people listed on the back of this brochure.

What other signs of Asian long-horned beetles might I find?

You may see round holes about 3/8 inch in diameter anywhere on the tree; oval or round wounds in the bark; piles of coarse sawdust at the bases of trees or where branches meet the main stem; heavy sap flow; and "frothing" at entry holes. If the holes are in a straight horizontal line, they are probably from a bird rather than an insect. Again, to be sure, call one of the experts



on the back of this brochure if you see possible signs of these insects in your yard.

What damage do Asian long-horned beetles cause?

Female beetles chew out areas in the bark to lay eggs, making the oval wounds mentioned earlier. When the larvae, or young, hatch, they tunnel into the tree, feeding as they go. The tunnels destroy the tree's vascular system, which carries water and nutrients, and eventually the tree dies. After the larvae develop into adults, they exit and leave large round holes. Winds may break off heavily "mined" branches.

What kinds of trees do they attack?

The beetles feed and reproduce in healthy hardwoods (not evergreens), and attack all types of maples. In New York, they also attacked horse chestnuts. In Chicago, silver and Norway maples, box-elders and some elms are heavily infested. In their native Asia, the beetles are found in elms, poplars, willows, mulberries, and other trees.

Are there any treatments or controls?

Insecticides are not effective because the beetles live most of their lives inside the tree. So far the only treatment has been to cut down trees in late autumn or early winter, after the adult beetles have died. If trees are cut while the beetles are still alive, they may move to other trees. The wood should be chipped and burned immediately.

Because Asian long-horned beetles are not native to the United States, there are no natural controls or enemies here to keep them in check.

Where have Asian long-horned beetles been found in the United States?

Infestations have been in Brooklyn and Amityville, N.Y., and in three Chicago-area neighborhoods. Although there have been 40 reports of the beetles being found in U.S. warehouses, they have not infested any other outdoor areas.

How do Asian long-horned beetles spread?

Left undisturbed, adult Asian long-horned beetles are likely to remain on or near the tree they emerged from, so their natural spread would be quite slow. The greater danger is artificial spread by humans. Infested crates carrying goods from China are shipped from ports into the interior United States, and from warehouses to retail businesses. The crates may be dumped in landfills or reused. Wood from trees that are trimmed or cut down may carry the beetles to new places. In Chicago, one infestation was discovered when a park employee, knowledgeable about insects, was hauling firewood from a tree cut down in a friend's yard and noticed an unfamiliar insect on the wood.

Have we found any Asian long-horned beetles in Wisconsin?

The U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) office in Wisconsin has been notified several times that shipments had come into the state from companies that had received merchandise from China in wooden crates carrying Asian long-horned beetles. The crates in Wisconsin had all been destroyed or landfilled, or did not appear to harbor Asian long-horned beetles. An Asian long-horned beetle was found three to four years ago in a Wisconsin warehouse, but there is no evidence of a reproducing population.

The ports of Milwaukee, Green Bay and Superior receive mostly commodities and raw materials, rather than finished goods, so the chance of the beetles arriving in crates at our ports is less than in Chicago or East and West Coast ports. However, we do receive a great deal of merchandise that arrives at other ports and comes to Wisconsin overland.

What should I do if I think I have found Asian long-horned beetles?

Collect at least one of the insects and call one of the people listed on the back of this brochure. You will need to answer some questions that may tell them that the insects you've found

are *not* Asian long-horned beetles. If there is any chance that you have found them, someone will come to check and collect some for laboratory identification.

Do not cut down trees that you think are infested without positive identification by experts. Even if you do have Asian long-horned beetles, don't cut trees down yourself. Tree removal should be done by state, city or federal officials through an organized program in late fall or winter. If the beetles are disturbed in the summer, they may move to other trees.

What if I receive merchandise in wooden crates?

Check for beetles, boring holes and/or sawdust in or near the crates. If you find this evidence, contact the Wisconsin office of APHIS, 608/264-5112. Companies could require their exporters to fumigate all shipments, or use a different type of packaging.

What else is the government doing about Asian long-horned beetles?

APHIS inspectors try to examine wood crating at the ports of entry. But only a small percentage of the vast amount of merchandise entering the country can be thoroughly inspected.

The federal government has imposed a requirement that wooden crates coming from China be treated before leaving the country, or that alternate packaging be used.

Where can I get more information?

You can visit these internet sites:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/longhorn>
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/bbnpag.html>
<http://www.dnr.state.il.us/ildnr/offices/pubaffrs/asian.htm>
<http://willow.ncfes.umn.edu/>

You can also watch for updates in the Pest Survey Bulletin, available on the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's web site:

<http://badger.state.wi.us/agencies/datcp/>

You can also phone or e-mail:

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