

Insect answers



WHITE PINE WEEVIL

The white pine weevil, *Pissodes strobi*, also known as the Sitka spruce weevil, feeds on the terminals of pines and spruces. This weevil is found throughout many of the western states.

Biology and Description

Adult white pine weevils are oval-shaped beetles. They are brown with light flecks that form a

band across the wing covers. They are about 1/4-inch (7 mm) long and have a prominent curved beak. Adults become active during late spring and early summer. During this time they feed on the tender bark of spruce or pine terminals, creating small cavities within which they deposit pearly-white eggs. The eggs hatch in about 10 days and the small larvae bore through the bark, into the wood and down the stem. The



White pine weevil eggs



White pine weevil larvae





White pine weevil adult

larvae are curled, white, and legless. When the larvae are mature in the fall they form fiber-lined cells in the wood or pith. The cells are pupal chambers. Pupation takes about two weeks. There seems to be one generation per year, but some white pine weevils overwinter as larvae or pupae in the terminal and change to adults the following spring, while others overwinter as adults in litter on the ground.

Damage

Smaller trees, 2 to 8 inches (5-22 cm) in diameter and 5 to 25 feet (1.6 m to 8 m) high are generally the most susceptible to weevil damage. Larval girdling kills or seriously injures the terminals causing either a crook in the trunk or a forked trunk. Feeding does not kill the entire tree, but it does destroy the tree's natural shape.

Control

No chemicals are registered for use on infested trees in the yard. However, pruning out and destroying infested tips from the tree in late summer or early fall before beetles emerge cuts down reinfestation the following year. The shape of the tree can be partly restored by training a new leader to take the place of the dead one.

The following chemical treatment is *restricted* to use on *nursery stock only*:

Insecticide*	Amount Per 100 Gal. of Water	Remarks
oxydemeton-methyl (Metasystox-R) 25% EC	1 1/2 pints	Spray terminal shoots in early May and again in early June to protect new growth from egg deposit and development.

* EC = emulsifiable concentrate

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Assistance from Washington State University is available to all persons, without regard to race, color, or national origin. Trade names have been used to simplify the presentation of information. No endorsement of products is intended.



Use pesticides with care. Read the label and follow its directions. Never smoke while using pesticides and avoid breathing the spray or dust. Wear natural rubber gloves when handling pesticides. Wash hands and face carefully with soap and water after applying. If insecticides are spilled on skin or clothing, remove contaminated clothing and wash skin thoroughly. Store pesticides in their original containers and be sure labels remain on the containers. Keep containers away from food or feed and out of reach of children or irresponsible persons.