

WHARF BORER

Common Name: Wharf borer

Common Family Name: False blister beetles

Origin: Introduced from Europe and now found uncommonly throughout much of North America, particularly along waterfront areas. The beetles prefer to invade extremely wet wood materials, as may be found along waterways.



Biology: The wharf borer are not a pest problem in dry, sound wood, but is found in older buildings as well as wooden support beams and pilings under them, where they can cause extensive damage. Where buildings are constructed over older sites where wood is buried in the ground the beetles may be present, or buildings with wood foundations, wood basement walls, or concrete over wood slabs on the ground. The adult beetles emerge within a pupa chamber in the wood, mate immediately after emerging, and then move toward whatever light they detect, often coming up into buildings in large numbers. The normal life cycle is one year.

Identification: Adult beetles are about one half inch long, and a light brown to reddish yellow color. Because of their long antennae they are similar to long-horned wood boring beetles (Cerambycidae), but differ by the antennae having segments all the same length, and the tips of the elytra are black, as are the eyes, legs, and sides of the prothorax. The body is covered with a dense layer of short, yellow hairs.



Characteristics Important in Control: Moisture control in the wood obviously is a huge factor, and if the moisture problem can be controlled the beetles problem will be reduced. Infested wood that is hidden behind walls or under slabs may be treated with borates, possibly with an injected foam solution. Wood buried in the soil and inaccessible to treatment or removal will require simply trapping adult beetles as they emerge.