

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.

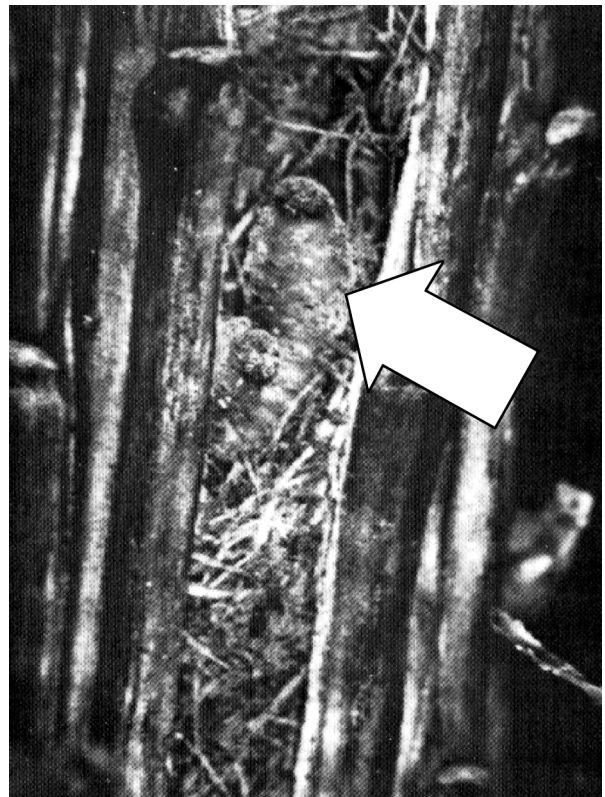
Biology and Description

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 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (7mm) 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 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 over-



White pine weevil eggs



White pine weevil larvae

winter 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–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

Cyfluthrin is an effective weevil killer. There are several home garden insecticide products containing cyfluthrin registered for use on trees. Apply to previous year's "leader" or terminal in late spring to early summer. Pruning out and destroying infested tips from the tree in late summer or early fall before beetles emerge can also cut 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.



White pine weevil adult



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Use pesticides with care. Apply them only to plants, animals, or sites listed on the label. When mixing and applying pesticides, follow all label precautions to protect yourself and others around you. It is a violation of the law to disregard label directions. If pesticides are spilled on skin or clothing, remove clothing and wash skin thoroughly. Store pesticides in their original containers and keep them out of the reach of children, pets, and livestock.

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