Red Turpentine Beetle

DAVEY Institute

TREE DOCTOR TIPS

Red Turpentine Beetle
(Dendrocotonus valens LeConte*)*

DESCRIPTION:
The red turpentine beetle is North America's largest bark beetle. The red-brown adults are attracted to resin or pitch from wounded or freshly cut trees and roots.

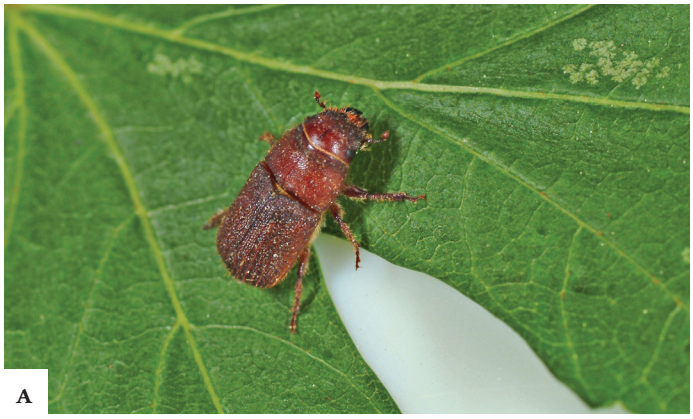
HOSTS:
Found on ponderosa, Monterey, Coulter pines and other conifers, red turpentine beetles rarely infest or kill healthy trees. Adults usually colonize the roots and lower main stem of stressed or dying trees, often with existing infestations of other bark beetle species.

BIOLOGY AND SYMPTOMS:
Adults lay eggs within the inner bark. Larvae hatch from eggs during warm weather and consume cambium tissue. New adults bore out and fly away. They often leave boring dust, light pink to reddish-brown pitch tubes around the bases of trees, and/or small pitch pellets. In combination with other stressors, the red turpentine beetle may cause tree crowns to fade from green to yellow to reddish.

MANAGEMENT:
Few natural or biological controls manage red turpentine beetles. Keep trees healthy and vigorous to prevent attacks. Avoid activities like paving, logging, grading and construction near valued trees.

Some pesticides applied to lower tree trunks and targeting adults that bore inside the tree to lay eggs may prevent attacks if timed well. These must be applied by a certified applicator. Chronically stressed trees or trees already experiencing significant canopy decline rarely recover. Injectable pesticides may be effective if applied preventively.

When planting, space trees properly to minimize stress. Treat or remove freshly cut stumps, fire-scorched trees, trees in compacted soil and actively dying trees. Contact your local arborist for more information or an inspection to assess the risk of this pest to your trees.



A

B

FIGURE A. RED TURPENTINE BEETLE
(Joseph Berger, Bugwood.org)

FIGURE B. CLOSE-UP, PITCH TUBES, PONDEROSA PINE
(Christine Buhl, Oregon Department of Forestry, Bugwood.org)

The scientists at ***The Davey Institute Research and Diagnostic Laboratories*** *support our arborists and technicians in diagnosing and prescribing based on the latest arboricultural science. For specific treatment and application details, your arborist may consult The Davey Institute's Plant Health Care Treatment Guide.*