

Backyard Buddies June 2015

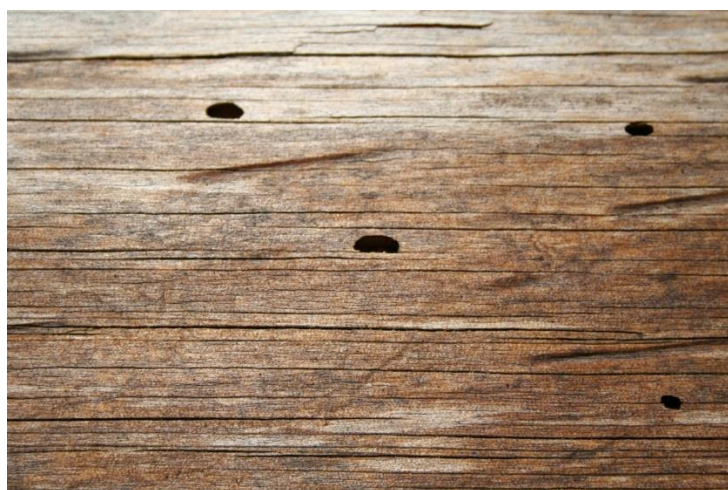
Don't Be Bored

First detected in WA in Parkerville in 2004, European house borer (EHB) is a serious exotic pest of dead and dry seasoned timber of pine, spruce and fir. EHB may be found in dead trees or dead branches of living trees. Present in Europe, Africa, Asia, South America and North America, EHB most likely arrived in WA as larvae in pine timber.

Many houses in WA have roof trusses made from untreated, seasoned pine. If an EHB infestation goes unnoticed, wood can reach the point of collapse.

What to look for

Public awareness is crucial for stopping the spread of EHB. The EHB beetle itself has a brownish-black body 8-25mm long, with antennae half the length of the body and two shiny black bumps on the first body segment behind the head. The wings are usually black and may have distinctive white patches. Native longicorn, jewel beetles and common house and garden insects like click beetles and mole crickets are often mistaken for EHB, but are not of concern and do not require reporting.



Exit hole running with the timber grain

EHB have the potential to go unnoticed until structural damage caused by the EHB larvae becomes evident. The larvae are cream coloured, elongated and cylindrical with an enlarged and flattened head and grow to about 40mm in length. EHB may be detected before significant damage occurs through individual vigilance or regular inspections of untreated timber by qualified pest control providers. You may hear the soft sounds of larvae chewing or notice faint blistering on the timber surface. Larvae pupate into adult beetles inside the wood and exit leaving an oval shaped hole around 10mm long and 5mm wide, which runs in line with the grain of the wood. The presence of frass; a powdery mix of wood dust and pellets of excrement, beneath the exit holes are obvious signs of EHB.



Left to right: Jewel beetle, native longicorn, male & female EHB, 50c, mole cricket, earwig and click beetle.

What you can do

Inspect any untreated pine regularly. When building in Restricted Movement Zones (RMZ) you must use treated pine or other non-susceptible material. Movement of untreated pine in and out of RMZ areas must be done in accordance with Agriculture and Related Resources Protection (EHB) Regulations 2006. Protect untreated pinewood by storing it in a suitable building or enclosure or keep it fully enclosed in plastic wrapping material. Dispose of unwanted pine timber (including tree waste, off-cuts, pallets and furniture) via green council bins, council verge collection or direct deposit to a local council refuse facility. Don't collect discarded pinewood from verge collections, waste bins or pine plantations.

For more information about EHB and RMZ areas go to agric.wa.gov.au/ehb. If you suspect you have found EHB beetles or larvae call 1800 084 881 or send photos to info@agric.wa.gov.au



European house borer, female