

**TEXAS PECAN IPM ARTICLE FOR
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by: Bill Ree
Extension Agent - IPM (Pecan)

Asian Ambrosia Beetle Active in East Texas

Although, it has been awhile since I have discussed this insect I thought this would be a good time to revisit this pest with all of the activity in east Texas. Fortunately so far this season I have only received one report of an infestation from a pecan grower.

The Asian ambrosia beetle, *Xylosandrus crassiusculus* (Motschulsky) is a minute ambrosia beetle that has been in the United States since 1974 and in east Texas since the mid 1980's. The host range for this insect is extensive and a few of the known hosts in the US include, peach, plum, cherry, persimmon, golden rain tree, sweet gum, Shumard oak, Chinese elm, magnolia, grape and unfortunately pecan.

Infestations from this insect are first noticed as toothpick like projections protruding from the trunk and main scaffold limbs. These projections are very fragile and break off but can extend from the trunk from 1/4 to 1 1/2 inch. Most infestations I have observed have been on trees that are less than 4 inches in diameter. The number of infestations or “hits” on an individual tree can range from one to more than an estimated 5,000 I observed on a red oak yesterday (one entry every 1/4 - 1/2 inch on a 3 inch diameter 8 foot red oak).

Infested trees either failed to break bud or are very slow in leafing out with the new foliage eventually wilting and dying. Infestations by this insect can kill the host plant down to the lowest point of infestation.

Infestations start with mated females boring into a host plant to create a gallery in which she lays her eggs. The female then inoculates the gallery with fungal spores she has carried with her and her and the offspring feed on the developing fungus. Once the larvae mature, pupate into adults males and females mate within the gallery and only mated females leave the host plant in search of a new host. After this, basic information on AAB biology is very limited and not completely understood..

Control methods for AAB are rather limited. If an infestation is observed where trees have multiple entries, remove and burn the infested trees. Since there seems to be an aggregation pheromone involved in colonizing a host you might want to leave one or two infested trees for a week or two to attract any late emerging adults and then remove these trees. Surrounding trees should be treated with chlorpyrifos or a pyrethroid as a preventative.

I would like to ask anyone that observes or suspects an infestation on pecan to please contact me.

