Fruit & Vegetable IPM Fact Sheet: Peachtree Borer

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Female PB
(R. Bessin)

Description

Peachtree borers (*Synanthedon exitiosa*; PB) are the larvae of a clearwing moth . Mature larvae are about $1^{1}/_{4}$ inches long and are cream colored with a brown head. Adult PB are sexually dimorphic; females are dark with two orange bands on the abdomen and have opaque front wings, while males resemble small wasps, with four narrow yellow bands on the abdomen. Females lay 500-600 eggs near the base of the host tree trunk.

Life History

PB overwinter as larvae under tree bark. In the spring, larvae will spin a silken cocoon covered in small pieces of chewed wood. PB pupate for 18-30 days before emerging as adults. Adults begin mating shortly after emergence and are most active in late morning to early afternoon. Females deposit eggs near the base of trees. Eggs hatch in 9-10 days. Larvae will travel down the trunk of the tree and enter the bark, usually through wounds. The3re is one generation of PB a year.

Mature PB larva
(NYSIPM)

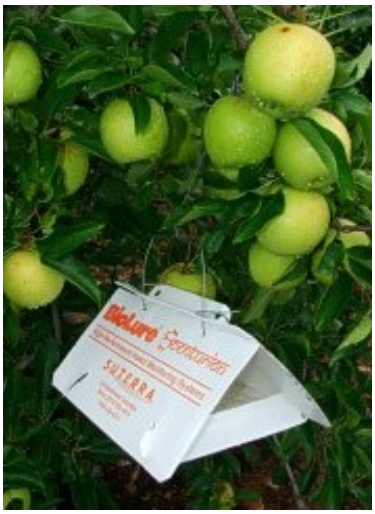
Sap draining from multiple injuries in peach tree trunk (USU Cooperative Extension)

Damage

PB larvae feeding is the cause of damage to trees. PB typically attack younger stone fruit and apple trees. Larvae tunnel into the lower trunk and roots of trees, feeding on growing tissue and inner bark. Damage to roots leads to reduced crop bearing capacity due to lack of nutrient uptake, while heavy feeding on the trunk can completely girdle the tree, resulting in death. Damage can be spotted by the appearance of sap and gum draining out of the lower trunk mixed with reddish-brown frass. Empty brown pupal cases can often be found around the base of damaged trees, or still inside the larval galleries.

Monitoring and Control

Control of PB is most effective in the brief interval between adult emergence and egg hatching. Pheromones can be used for both monitoring or mating disruption. When used as mating disruption, commercial dispensers are placed in orchards and release large amounts of synthetic sex pheromones that hinder males ability to find females, preventing eggs from being fertilized. Pheromone traps are best used to determine the emergence time of adults. Insecticides should be applied 8-16 days after the fist adults are detected in the trap. A low pressure application that thoroughly wets the trunk and the is needed to ensure good control against newly hatching larvae. Since there is only one generation per year, only one spray is needed to control PB.



Pheromone trap

Male PB
(R. Bessin)