Bronze Birch Borer

Scientific Name: *Agrilus anxius*

Host: Birch

Damage/symptoms: Girdling injuries cause dieback of limbs in the crown. D-shaped exit holes will be present on trunks and branches on parts of the tree that are unshaded. The infestations will also cause raised ridges in the bark. The galleries that are formed from boring underneath the bark make a zig-zag pattern and are packed with sawdust.

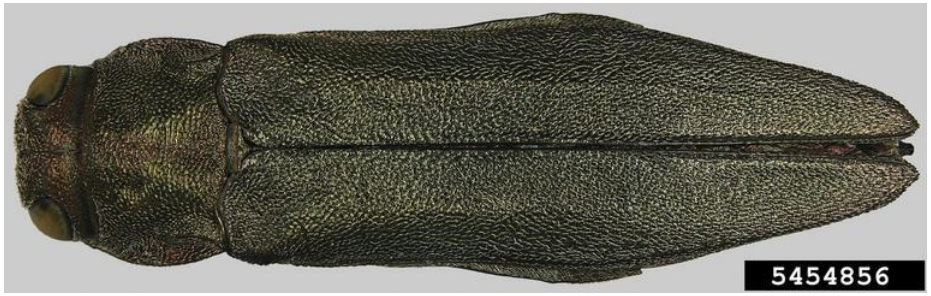

Figure 1. Bronze birch borer adult. Photo by S. Valley

Figure 2. Bronze birch borer damage on trunk. Photo by S. Katovich

Life cycle: Females lay eggs in bark crevices or in other protected sites. Egg laying begins in the upper crown of the tree or in branches (usually less than 1/2" thick) and then continues to thicker portions of the tree. The eggs will hatch in about two weeks. The larvae will overwinter within the cambium and will pupate in early spring. The adults will exit the trees in late May or early June. There is one generation/ year.

Management: Birch are often stressed, making them more susceptible to the borer. Provide a large mulched area around the tree to conserve moisture and to protect the root system. Any limbs showing signs of infestation should be pruned out prior to beetle emergence in the spring. Preventive insecticides can be applied as trunk sprays and should be timed to coincide with egg laying in the summer. Systemic insecticides with the active ingredients imidacloprid or dinotefuran can also be applied in the spring to prevent future infestations.

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MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION Integrated Pest Management