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INSECTS OF PINE TREES

by Stanley Rachesky
Entomologist, University of Illinois

Everyone, or almost everyone, has a pine tree of some kind or other on their property. Pines are probably the most popular type of plant. Insects can cause great headaches once they begin to harm your pines. Following are some of the problems to be on the lookout for and how to control them:

Sawflies can become very deadly to young growing pines. One defoliation can kill them. Larva of this particular species is often seen feeding on the needles. The larvae are about an inch long with a red, brown or black head. Spots may or may not run lengthwise along the body. This insect lives out the winter as a pupa in the fallen debris about the base of the tree. The adult sawfly emerges in the spring and in appearance resembles a bee. Females slit the pine needles where they lay eggs. Ravenous feeders, the needles soon begin disappearing.

For control Carbaryl (Sevin), Malathion, or Diazinon can be applied when the larva are seen feeding.

White pine weevils prefer white pine but will also be found on jack and Scotch pine. Terminal leaders of the infested tree are usually in a dying or dead state. Adults living out the winter will feed on the terminal twigs during spring. Also, during the spring the larva will feed under the bark causing damage enough to kill twigs.

Control is the same as for sawflies.

Pine needle Scale appears as tiny white specks directly on the pine needle itself. This scale will infest spruces but its favorite host are pines especially Austrian and Mugho pine. Chlorophyll is sucked from the pine needle causing the pine to shed its needles.

Control of scales must be timed. The scale must emerge from under its shell to obtain control. In northern Illinois pine needles scale control should begin in June using Malathion. Repeat applications will be necessary approximately every 5 days. Three applications should suffice.

Pine bark aphid is another problem on pine. White cottony type material will be readily observed on the limbs and trunks of pine. White pine is the favorite host but pine bark aphid can also be found on other species of pine. Hardy trees are rarely damaged but care should be taken with young newly set pines.

Malathion or Lindane should be applied in June for control. These insecticides must be applied with force using high-water pressure.

The **European pine shoot moth** is a black headed brown larva which can cause harsh damage to Scotch, Red, and Mugho pines. Boring through the shoots, this larva causes them to turn brownish in color and die. Overwintering larvae become active in the spring and tunnel into the uninfested shoots.

Control can be accomplished by spraying with DDT. Spray the ends of branches thoroughly in mid-April and again in late June - early July.

The **Nantucket Pine Moth** is a small yellowish larva about 1/2 inch long. It will kill the tips of pine trees. Eggs from the female adult moth are laid on the needles and terminal leaf buds of pine trees. The hatching larva bore into the needles first but then bore into the middle of twigs. Webs are constructed that will enclose the affected areas.

The insecticide and time of application for control is the same as for the European pine shoot moth. In addition, however, the infested shoots should be re-

moved and destroyed.

The **Zimmerman Pine Moth Larva** can be light gray, reddish-yellow, or greenish in color. It tunnels beneath the bark and around branches and limbs. It does the most serious damage at the whorls. Great amounts of pitch usually indicate the presence of the larva. Austrian pine and Scotch pine are most susceptible to this insect problem.

For control DDT should be applied in early August. The foliage must be sprayed thoroughly.

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LIFE SAVING HINTS FOR THUNDERSTORMS

- 1) Stay indoors during a thunderstorm if you can.
- 2) Seek shelter in buildings. Do not stand under trees unless surrounded by them. Avoid the tall trees. A grove is much safer than a single tree.
- 3) Stop tractor work and get off, especially if the tractor is pulling metal equipment. Tractors and other farm implements are often struck by lightning, especially if they are grounded.
- 4) Avoid wire fences, hilltops, small exposed sheds, and wide open places. Don't work on fences, pipelines, or structural steel fabrication during an electrical storm.
- 5) Stay out of water and small boats.
- 6) Don't use metal objects such as fishing poles and golf clubs. Golfers wearing cleated shoes are particularly good lightning rods.
- 7) Stay away from open doors and windows, fireplaces, radiators, stoves, metal pipes, sinks and plug-in electrical appliances. Don't use such things as electric hair dryers, electric tooth brushes, or electric razors during a bad storm.
- 8) Don't use the telephone during a thunderstorm unless you must — lightning may strike telephone lines outside.
- 9) Don't take laundry off the clothesline, and don't handle flammable materials in open containers. Don't take a bath or shower during the storm.
- 10) Stay in your car or pickup if traveling. Metal-topped autos offer excellent protection. However, convertibles do not offer this safety.
- 11) If your conduct hasn't been good lately — PRAY!
— Thanks to Roger Brown