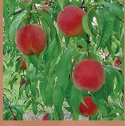




Stone Fruit IPM for Beginners

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Chapter 23

Lesser peachtree borer

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Lesser peachtree borer

Synanthedon pictipes (Grote & Robinson)

Hosts

Lesser peachtree borer is a pest of all stone fruits, especially peach and cherry. It is found widespread in most fruit-growing states and provinces in eastern North America. With the prevalence of canker and winter injury in northern peach orchards, this species can be a major pest.

Time of concern

There are two generations per year in its northern range. First-generation adults begin to emerge around shuck split or shuck fall in peach. The flight of second brood adults generally begins in July and continues into September, overlapping with the adult activity of another important clear-wing moth, the peachtree borer (*S. exitiosa*).

Damage, symptoms and pest cycle

The adult is a clear-winged, metallic-blue, day-flying moth. Both males and females have two or more pale yellow narrow fringes of scales across the abdomen, making them appear wasp-like. Both males and females have pale yellow scales on the top of the head right behind the eyes and black scales between the antennae.



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The larva is white or cream-colored and hairless, with short legs and a yellowish brown to dark brown head.



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This pest attacks damaged areas of scaffold limbs of all stone fruits. Larvae feed on the inner layer of

bark, killing the cambium and girdling the conductive tissue, which results in significant production loss in older orchards. Larvae normally gain entrance at areas that are already injured from *Cytospora* canker, winter injury, split limbs from heavy loads, or pruning or mechanical wounds. Their sites of infestation tend to be on the upper trunk or lower limbs and frequently cause a flow of gum containing frass.



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Since the lesser peachtree borer and the peachtree borer often occur together, it is important to note their major distinguishing features. Both male and female lesser peachtree borers can be mistaken for the male peachtree borers, except for the location of tufts of pale hair on their heads. In the lesser peachtree borer, they are found in back of the eyes. In the peachtree borer, the pale hairs will be between the antennae.

These two borers also can be distinguished by the fact that the lesser peachtree borer is earlier in the season, requires already injured trees, and infests higher up on the trunks and in the lower branches. The peachtree borer most often burrows under the bark at or near ground level and is only active later in the season.

IPM steps for beginners

Examine the bases of trees for frass or sawdust-like excrement in the exuded gum. Use pheromone traps to monitor species presence and flight activity. Pheromones used to monitor for lesser peachtree borer are species-specific. Mating disruption is an effective option in multi-acre plantings. Insecticide drenches or sprays to wounds on scaffold limbs can be applied at bud swell or in the summer.

Acknowledgements: This information was adapted with permission from "Tree Fruit Field Guide," NRAES, Cornell University.