

Blackhorned Pine Borer

Scientific Name: *Callidium antennatum hesperum* (Casey)

Order: Coleoptera (Beetles)

Family: Cerambycidae (Longhorned Beetles)



Figure 1. Blackhorned pine borer adult.

Identification and Descriptive Features: The adult insect is a bluish-black beetle, about 15 mm inch long with antennae the same length as the body. The wing covers are more leathery than those of other beetles and the body form is rather flattened. Larvae, found within wood, resemble most roundheaded wood borers, being off-white, elongate legless grubs with brown heads. Larval damage produces sculptured tunneling under the bark that somewhat resembles tracks produced by a router. Tunnels produced by blackhorned pine borer and other *Callidium* species often are packed with a distinctive, granular frass.

Distribution in Colorado: Potentially statewide in association with pines. It is primarily associated with ponderosa pine but will develop in other pines and is often moved in transplants.



Figure 2. Larva of a blackhorned pine borer exposed from under bark.

Life History and Habits: Winter is spent within pine trees, as a full-grown larva. Adults can emerge throughout the warm months of the year and have been observed in early May along the Front Range. Adult beetles feed on tender bark of twigs and shoots, and females lay eggs in pits in the bark. The larvae tunnel under the bark making very wide, wavy tracks that characteristically score the outer wood deeply. Older larvae then excavate oval tunnels deep in the wood, where they overwinter. There is one generation per year.

The blackhorned pine borer is a common insect associated with dead or dying pines, particularly ponderosa pine and Austrian pine. Occasionally it damages live trees under severe stress, notably recent transplants, and may kill-off these previously stressed trees. Rarely, injured or stressed spruce may also be attacked in landscaped plantings.

This borer also may cause concern to home owners when adult beetles emerge from firewood or unseasoned lumber. Also, large amounts of sawdust can be produced and expelled by the larvae developing in fire wood, producing concerns about potential harm to household items. Since blackhorned pine borer can only develop in logs with bark intact, spread and damage to wood furniture or timbers can not occur.



Figure 3. Sculptured tunneling under juniper bark produced by larvae of *Callidium texanum*.

Related Species: *Callidium texanum* Schaeffer is a common associate of juniper throughout much of the state, producing similar injuries. Two other *Callidium* species have been reported from the state, although they may be incidental introductions and are not established. There is a single report of *Callidium cicatricosum* Mannerheim, known from Douglas-fir and grand fir, from Boulder County. A far western species of *Callidium* associated with juniper, *C. juniperi* Fisher, is reported from Mesa County.