Ips Beetles

Typical Location When Observed: Associated pines and spruce and common associate of firewood.

Importance/Damage: Often a minor pest of living trees, usually causing damage to trees suffering severe drought stress and/or recent root injuries. Large numbers may locally develop on slash piles and later move to living trees.

Distinguishing Features: A small brown beetle (4-6 mm) with a stubby body and jagged hind end. When invading the trunks of trees fine brown sawdust accumulates below the entry point. Larvae are legless and grub-like, found in galleries under the wood. The gallery pattern often involves a central area (nuptial chamber) with 3-4 radiating egg galleries.

Look-Alikes: There are several Ips species of very similar appearance. Ips beetles can be separated from the more damaging Dendroctonus species of bark beetles (e.g., mountain pine beetle, spruce beetle by having the hind edge of Ips beetle body being jagged; the wing covers of Dendroctonus species smoothly cover the hind body.

Resources: The life history, habits and management of this insect are covered in Extension Fact Sheet 5.558, Ips Beetles.

Scientific Name: Ips species
Order: Coleoptera (Beetles)
Family/Subfamily: Curculionidae/Scolytinae (Bark Beetles)