

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry

271 Mast Road, Durham, N.H. 03824

Phone: 603-868-7600; Fax: 603-868-1066; Web Site: <http://na.fs.fed.us>

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phone:

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Contact: Glenn Rosenholm

603-880-6325

E-mail: grosenholm@fs.fed.us

Recently-detected Asian insect found in Maine; no tree damage so far

DURHAM, N.H.—An exotic insect recently detected on the continent has been spotted in southern Maine woods.

Maine Forest Service forest health managers found two *Xyleborus seriatus* specimens in pheromone-baited exotic species monitoring traps in Sanford, May 20 and June 2. One specimen was found in the May 20 collection of about 600 insects; the other was spotted in the June 2 batch of about 100 insects.

The forest exotic insect survey in Maine was part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey Program.

"This is why we're running the survey, to detect exotics," said Maine Forest Service Entomologist Charlene Donahue.

The *X. seriatus* is a bark beetle native to Asia. It made international headlines three years ago when entomologists detected it in Southbridge, Mass., the first time on North America. Today it can be found in the Bay State's Worcester, Essex, Middlesex and Franklin Counties. It has not been detected so far in neighboring New Hampshire. It is not known when the *X. seriatus* first arrived on the continent.

Sometimes exotic insect populations turn invasive after becoming established in a new location. Invasive insects can cause catastrophic harm to native tree populations.

Three of the better known highly-destructive invasive pests in the United States include the emerald ash borer, Asian longhorn beetle and hemlock wooly adelgid. The EAB has killed more than 25 million ash trees in the Midwest and mid-Atlantic since it was first detected in the Detroit area in 2002. It currently threatens all North American ash.

The U.S. Forest Service considers invasive species to be one of its top forest threats. They are responsible for about \$138 billion in forest damage, reduced values and costs for eradication and control efforts the United States each year.

Not all exotic insects become invasive, though. So far the *X. seriatus* has not shown characteristics of invasive insects such as causing widespread tree damage and increased tree mortality.

"We're not seeing any damage from it," said Mass. Dept. of Conservation and Recreation Forest Health Program Leader Charlie Burnham.