

Mountain Pine Beetle



Mountain pine beetle.

Typical Location When Observed: Associated with pine forests and carried on recently cut pine firewood.

Geographic Location: Normally found in forested areas of lodgepole and ponderosa pine. Occasionally moved to other areas with infested logs.

Importance/Damage: A serious pest of forests capable of killing live, healthy trees. Can cause extensive tree mortality during its periodic outbreaks.

Distinguishing Features: A small insect (5-7 mm) with a stubby body and dark brown-black overall coloration. When invading living trees a mixture of pitch and sawdust forms “pitch tubes” on the trunk. Larvae are legless and grub-like, found in galleries under the wood.

Look-Alikes: There are several *Dendroctonus* species of very similar appearance but are associated with other tree species (e.g., spruce, Douglas-fir). Ips beetles may also occur in pines but can be separated from mountain pine beetle by examining them in side profile. The hind edge of *Ips* beetles are jagged, whereas 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 5.528, *Mountain Pine Beetle*.

Scientific Name: *Dendroctonus ponderosae*

Order: Coleoptera (Beetles)

Family/Subfamily: Curculionidae/Scolytinae (Bark Beetles)



Mountain pine beetle larvae in tunnels. Photograph courtesy Scott Tunnock/IPM Images.

Actual Length

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