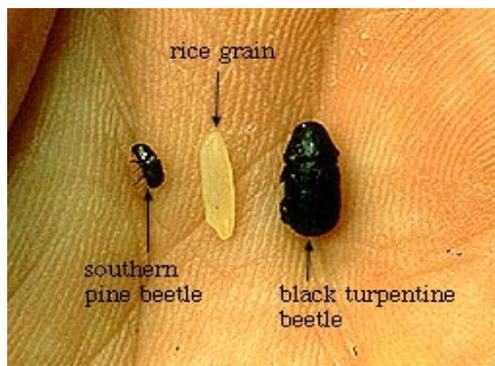


ALERT

DESTRUCTIVE SOUTHERN PINE BEETLE IN EAST HAMPTON

The GCEH Conservation Committee ALERTS report there is an infestation of the Southern Pine Beetle (SPB) on Long Island, first discovered September 2014 in Suffolk County. The situation has become dire as this tiny pest, smaller than a grain of rice, is considered one of the most destructive in the United States attacking all species of pines, with an apparent preference for pitch pine, the predominant species in the Long Island Pine Barrens. Here in East Hampton, an infestation of SPB has been found in Bannister Park necessitating pine trees be taken down by the Village.

Size Comparison of Southern Pine Beetle w/ Rice Grain and Black Turpentine Beetle



Local and federal agencies are working to save the more than 100,000 acres of pine barrens which are located above Long Island's sole source water aquifer. These trees are environmentally important and protect this water source. Studies show that the use of insecticides to control SPB are ineffective and the chemicals pose too great of a threat to the aquifer that supplies drinking water for the 2 million residents of Suffolk County.

Eliminating the infestation of pines on Long Island is paramount in combating the beetle. The most effective method of stopping the spread of SPB is by cutting down infested trees. Cutting these trees during the winter can reduce the population by killing the brood that is wintering within the tree. Trees should be destroyed and not moved to other areas.



Aerial and ground surveys confirm that infested pines die within several months. The tree's needles will turn from green to yellow to reddish brown in as little as 2 weeks after the initial attack. Be on the lookout for the 3 telltale signs of SPB infestation ... pitch tubes, exit holes, and galleries (tunnels) found under the bark.

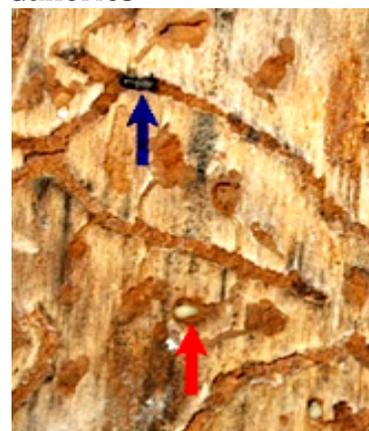
Pitch Tubes



Exit Holes



Galleries



In New Jersey, more than 50,000 acres of pine barrens have been destroyed. To control the spread of the Southern Pine Beetle on Long Island, immediate action must be taken to report suspect trees. Recently dead pine trees that show the above signs should be reported to the NYS DEC Forest Health Diagnostic Lab at 1-866-640-0652 or email photos of suspicious trees with close ups of damage to foresthealth@dec.ny.gov

More information is available at:

http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/0815southernpinebeetle.pdf

Sources: NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, and NYS Conservationist