

Wood-boring Pests in Firewood

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Wood boring beetles, such as bark beetles and long-horned beetles, are commonly brought into houses in firewood. Metallic wood boring beetles, carpenter ants, termites, deathwatch beetles, and horntail wasps may also be found in firewood. Most of these insects bore in dead, dying, or injured wood and were probably present in the wood before it was cut into firewood. Some may penetrate firewood if it is freshly cut and stored outside. During cold weather, the insects are inactive outside but can become active after the wood is brought into the house. They may begin to crawl or fly in the house. Windows or lights oftentimes attract wood-boring beetles. Several of the above-mentioned pests are featured below in Figures 1-8.

Most insects found in firewood should not damage the house or its contents. Exceptions include carpenter ants, termites, and deathwatch beetles; they can damage the house or its contents. Wood containing such pests should not be stored in or near the house or other buildings. Very rarely, one of the metallic wood boring beetles, the golden buprestid, may periodically reinfest untreated or unpainted wood of a building.

Management:

Infested firewood should be burned or removed from the house. Insects in the house can usually be swept up or otherwise removed without difficulty. In the summer, placing the firewood in the sun outdoors and covering it with plastic for several weeks may help kill any insects within the wood.



Fig. 1. Carpenter ant worker.
By A.L. Antonelli.



Fig. 2. Banded alder borer.
By R.D. Akre.



Fig. 3. Redheaded ash borer.
By R.D. Akre.



Fig. 4. Bark beetle. By K. Grey.



Fig. 5. Larva of California prionus
(Long horn borer), about 2 in. long.
By A.L. Antonelli.



Fig. 6. Flatheaded fir borer.
By K. Grey.



Fig. 7. Dampwood termite worker.
Author unknown.



Fig. 8. Golden buprestid.
By A.L. Antonelli.