

"Bug of the Month"

A common problem of Douglas-fir in the Pacific Northwest is the Douglas-fir twig miner, *Pityophthorus* spp. .

WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE? The Douglas-fir twig miner is a small Scolytid or bark beetle. The adult beetle is bronze/brownish in color and only about 3mm long. The larvae are about 4mm long when mature and are cream color, legless, curled grubs.

WHAT DO THEY DO? Overwintering beetles emerge from the twigs in the spring when the new shoots of Douglas-fir are about 2 inches long. The beetle selects a twig and tunnels into the previous year's growth. The female beetle then excavates a small chamber and deposits a single egg, though sometimes two eggs are laid. When the larva emerges, usually sometime in July or August, it feeds mainly on the previous year's growth, but it will also mine the new shoots.

Shortly after the parent beetle enters the twig, the new shoots become flaccid and gradually change color to brown and later to red. Because new shoots are potential cone bearers, a beetle infestation may affect the cone crop of the following year. Also, damage to the previous year's twigs may kill the young cones.



Generally, the damage caused by the Douglas-fir twig miner is unimportant. However, severe damage and stunting can result, especially in plantations or Christmas tree areas and in ornamental plantings.

MANAGEMENT

- Remove the infested twigs as they appear and dispose of them.

MORE QUESTIONS? Please do not hesitate to give your "Bug Docs" a call at com.: (360) 315-4450, DSN: 322-4450 or you can e-mail us at ndveccmei@pnw.med.navy.mil.