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EC58-1586 Entomology : Control Lilac Borers

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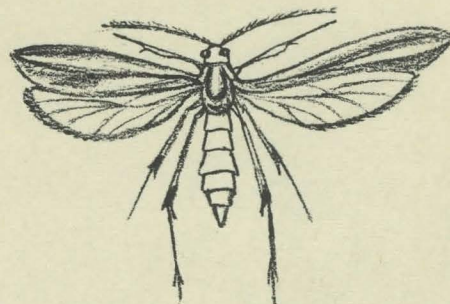
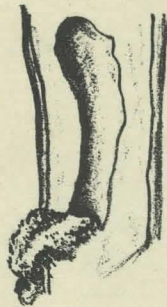


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CONTROL LILAC BORERS

By BOB ROSELLE Extension Entomologist



E.C. 58-1586

DESCRIPTION

The adult lilac borer is a clear winged moth which resembles a wasp in appearance. The forewings are brown, the hind wings are clear with a dark border. The body is brown and about 1 inch in length. It is a strong flier, and is rarely observed. The borer (larva stage) is white with a brown head, and about 1½ inches long when fully developed.

LIFE HISTORY

The insect passes the winter as a partly grown larva in stems of lilac. The borer starts feeding in the spring, maturing in late spring and early summer. It pupates in the burrow near the surface of the bark and emerges from May until July. The thin, brown pupa case is often left partially emerged from the burrow opening. Eggs are deposited on the bark of lilacs at the base of the canes. After hatching, young borers begin working in the canes and remain there during the summer, fall, and winter.

INJURY

Serious damage to lilacs is common in Nebraska. Infested canes often wilt and leaves turn brown, as larvae destroy the sapwood. Canes are often damaged to such an extent that they break, usually

near the ground. Infested canes are usually swollen at the point of infestation, and sawdust-like material is pushed out of the holes in the bark. Bark is cracked and separated from the heartwood.

CONTROL

Broken and wilting canes should be pruned out and burned. Borers can be killed in their burrows by injecting a teaspoon or two of carbon tetrachloride, or commercial borer paste into the burrow, then immediately plugging the opening with soil or putty. Light infestations can be controlled by removing borers with a sharp knife or by probing with a stiff wire. Injuries should be painted with an approved wound dressing.

Lilac canes can be partially protected by spraying with DDT or dieldrin several times during the spring and summer. Use 6 tablespoons of 50% DDT wettable powder, or 2 tablespoons of 15% dieldrin wettable powder to 1 gallon of water. Apply spray to lower portions of the canes to the point of run-off. Apply the first spray the first of May and repeat every 3 or 4 weeks until the first of August.

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