

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF APHIS SURVEY TEAMS AS THEY CONDUCT SURVEYS OF QUARANTINE AREAS

1. Q. What does the Asian longhorned beetle look like?

A. Individuals are $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches long with jet black body and mottled white spots on the back, the female usually larger than the male. The long antennae are 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the body length in the female and $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ times, in the male, with distinctive alternating black and white bands on each segment. The feet have a blue tinge.

2. Q. How did the Asian longhorned beetle get here?

A. We can't be sure but probably wooden crating, pallets etc. used for imports from China had live larvae inside. This wood was often discarded in junk piles. The larvae developed into adult beetles and then flew off into nearby host trees.

3. Q. Where does the Asian longhorned beetle come from?

A. It is native to the Eastern part of Asia.

4. Q. What is being done to prevent more Asian longhorned beetles from getting into the country?

A. Since 12/17/98, any solid wood crating or pallets entering America and originating in the Peoples Republic of China must be completely free of bark and have a certificate of treatment by kiln drying or fumigation. Shipments with wood products lacking this certification are returned to origin or the wood is separated from the cargo and destroyed.

5. Q. What areas are infested in New York State?

A. As of July, 2000 Asian longhorned beetles infestations have been found in the following areas in the boroughs of New York and villages of Long Island:

Brooklyn: northwest part, including communities of Greenpoint, Williamsburg, Fort Greene, Bedford-Stuyvesant and Bushwick.

Queens: southwest part, including communities of Long Island City, Sunnyside, Woodside, Southern Astoria, Ridgewood, and Maspeth. Bayside-both sides of Northern Blvd. Between Bell Blvd. and Cross Island Pkwy. Flushing-around Bowne Park.

Manhattan: Ruppert Park on E 93 St., Lower East Side and East Village

Long Island: south shore including Massapequa, Massapequa Park, Amityville, Copaige, Lindenhurst and a small area in Islip.

6. Q. Is the Asian longhorned beetle anywhere else other than New York City and Long Island?

A. The Chicago metropolitan area currently is battling an infestation. Adults and larvae have also been found in warehouses the U. S. & Canada, but have not been detected outside of the warehouse facilities.

7. Q. What kind of trees does the Asian longhorned beetle infest?

A. The infested trees in New York include maple, elm, horsechestnut, birch, willow and poplar. As of July 2000, about 5000 trees have been discovered infested and removed in the New York infestations.

8. Q. Does the Asian longhorned beetle infest oak trees?

A. Of the trees we've found, we haven't found it on any oak trees. The preferred hosts in New York are maple, elm, horsechestnut, birch, willow and poplar.

9. Q. Why? Is the wood too hard?

A. There are other species of beetles that infest oaks. For every tree species, there's probably some species in the beetle family that infests it.

10. Q. Wacha doin' mister, lookin' for boids?

A. We're looking for an insect, new to this country, that kills trees. Here is a sheet with some information about it.

11. Q. Can you see them up in the trees?

A. Inspectors look for symptoms of infestation, egg sites, frass (shavings and excrement from larval tunneling) and exit holes from adult emergence. Adult beetles can also be seen between late June and the first hard frost.

12. Q. What does it do to the trees?

A. The larvae eat the sapwood and heartwood making galleries in the tree and branches. This impedes the trees circulation and nutrient uptake and weakens branches so that they can break easily.

13. Q. What happens if you find a tree infested with Asian longhorned beetle?

A. The tree is removed, the wood ground into chips, and the chips incinerated.

14. Q. Can't you just remove the infested branches?

A. We can't see all the infested branches from the ground. If the egg and exit holes are at the top of the branch, we wouldn't see them. Also, many egg sites are just small slits in the bark and not easily observed. The larvae may tunnel deep inside the tree, and in order to ensure the insect is destroyed the host tree must be removed and completely destroyed.

15. Q. Why can't you kill the Asian longhorned beetle with chemicals? Are they resistant to them?

A. The Asian longhorned beetle spends most of its life in the larval stage, deep inside the tree, where chemicals can't reach them.

16. Q. Are there any insecticides that can get inside the tree and kill the Asian longhorned beetle?

A. Currently there are no pesticides currently registered for this use. Trial treatments with imidicloprid to protect uninfested host trees (prophylactic treatment) are currently in progress in New York and Chicago.

17. Q. Who removes the trees and how much will it cost me? What happens if they damage my property?

A. The trees are removed by a state hired private contractor. There is no cost to you. A state inspector is present at every removal to make sure it's done properly.

18. Q. Will you replace the tree that's removed?

A. A tree replacement program at no cost to the homeowner is in place. Non-host trees are replanted.

19. Q. Is the Asian longhorned beetle harmful to people?

A. If you hold one and place your finger in front of its jaws its can give you a strong nip. Otherwise, it just eats wood.

20. Q. Will the Asian longhorned beetle get into my furniture or house?

A. Eggs are layed only in live host trees, not structural wood like termites.

21. Q. Suppose I see a beetle or a tree with infestation symptoms? What should I do?

A. New York City-(718) 553-0101, Long Island- (631) 598-5943.

22. Q. Where can I get more and updated information?

A. The best place is the internet. Www.aphis.usda.gov.

23. Q. Suppose I refuse to let you remove my tree?

A. Your tree will be dead anyway in a few years. There's no way to stop it. Meanwhile, weakened branches could break off and fall, damaging your property or possibly even injuring someone. If beetles from your tree infest your neighbor's tree, they might sue you. This is a state quarantine, passed by both houses of the legislature and signed by Governor Pataki. There have been cases, in the past where the State Attorney's Office has obtained a warrant to remove the tree.

24. Q. My neighbor's tree is growing over my yard and touching my house. In the fall, it drops leaves in my yard and I have to rake them. Can I cut down his tree or cut off the branches over my yard?

A. That's a legal question and I don't have a license to practice law. You need to ask a lawyer.

25. Q. Can I get a street tree planted in front of my house? Can you take down or prune the street tree in front of my house?

A. (Give number of borough forestry or community board in NYC or town agency in LI.)

26. Q. The tree in front of my house is pushing up my sidewalk. What can I do?

A. (See answer to 25.)

27. Q. I told them years ago and nothing happened. Can you tell them?

A. We have no contact with them. Try a private attorney or elected official.

28. Q. If it isn't ALB, then what is killing my tree, causing these holes, etc.?

A. Many other insects and plant diseases cause damage to trees. Consult with your local University Extension agent or a certified arborist and tree care company.

29. Q. You checked my tree before. Why do you have to check it again?

A. We didn't find symptoms of infestation on your tree last time. It is necessary to reinspect areas where infested trees were found.

30. Q. How often can I expect you to come here?

A. We try to check each host tree in the infested area, twice a year.

31. Q. What do you hope to accomplish?

A. Our goal is to eradicate this insect from this country.

32. Q. Why are you doing this?

A. We've already lost most of our native chestnuts and elms to introduced foreign invaders. We don't want the same thing to happen to these hardwood trees. Hardwood trees provide us with shade in the summer, brilliant foliage in the fall, lumber, and maple syrup.

33. Q. Does it look like you're accomplishing this goal?

A. It's too soon to tell yet but we're giving it our best shot. The fact that we're not finding many of them in areas that were heavily infested years ago is a good sign.

34. Q. Are there any natural enemies in Asia we can bring here?

A. Our research laboratory is looking into that. We have to be sure that whatever we introduce into this country doesn't become a problem here.

35. Q. Do they have any predators in this country?

A. We've seen birds eat adult beetles and woodpeckers can seek out and get larvae inside the trees. This helps reduce the population but won't eradicate them.