

AN INFORMATIVE ILLUSTRATED GUIDE ABOUT WOODWORM

COMMONLY FOUND IN THE UK

This is a very useful illustrated ten page guide that will help you identify of many of the different species of wood-boring beetles commonly found infesting timber built into properties in the UK. Of significance is that those wood boring insects that require no treatment are identified. To download the guide click on the link below.

[You may download the full guide by clicking here.](#)

Woodworm Guide PDF Example Pages

POWDER POST BEETLE (*Cyrtus brunneus*)



Timber types attacked:

Superficial of seasoned wide-pored hardwoods with high starch content. Timbers over 15 years old not attacked. Often found in stack or strip flooring.

Damage:

Tunnels lead to run along grain. Often causes 'surface' tunnelling where timbers are stacked. Tunnels filled with loose flour-like bore dust.

Bore dust:

Talc like when rubbed between fingers. Cream in colour. Easily dislodged from tunnels.

Exit holes:

1mm - 2mm diameter. Circular.

Life cycle: 1 to 2 years outdoors, 8 to 10 months indoors

a. Adult: 4 - 7mm in length. Emerge outdoors between July - August, anytime indoors.

b. Eggs: Laid down open vessels, white, elongated with tail. Hatch in 2-3 weeks.

c. Larva: Initially feed and bore along grain. Up to 5mm in length.

d. Pupa: White, looks more like a beetle than a larva.

Notes:

Usually a problem in timber yards or hardwood stores, e.g., furniture factories. Found in newly introduced hardwoods in buildings but the origin is usually from storage areas prior to introduction.

Sometimes confused with Common Furniture Beetle damage.

Quick identification:

Only found in wide-pored hardwoods. Larvae flour like dust.

DEATHWATCH BEETLE (*Xestobium rufoalbum*)



Timber types attacked:

Superficial and heartwood of hardwoods, usually oak, which have partly decayed. Softwoods are rarely attacked.

Damage:

Extensive tunnelling especially towards centre of large dimensioned timber. Damage often more extensive than expected from external appearance.

Bore dust:

Contains fan-shaped pellets visible to the naked eye. Generally cream in colour.

Exit holes:

3 mm in diameter. Circular.

Life cycle: 2 to 14 years

a. Adult: 6 - 9 mm in length. Emerge from timber between March - June.

b. Eggs: Eggs are laid between 10 & 20 days after mating. Eggs are pearly white, lemon-shaped. Laid in cracks and crevices.

c. Larva: Crawl on wood surface prior to boring into wood. Feed and grow for up to 12-14 years. May grow up to 9 mm in length.

d. Pupa: Develops below surface of wood in July - August. Pre-emergent adults wait in pupa chamber until following year.

Notes:

Adult beetles can often be found on and beneath infested timbers during emergence period. 90% fly but requires high temperatures to do so.

Quick identification:

Large fan-shaped pellets, attacks hardwoods.

HOUSE LONGHORN BEETLE (*Hyloterpes aquaticus*)



Timbers attacked:
Sapwood of seasoned softwood

Damage:
Vary severe tunnelling in sapwood. Can lead to structural collapse. Frequently only a thin surface veneer of sound wood remains. Tunnels are somewhat flattened. Commonly found in roofs.

Bore dust:
Gritty. Full of 'sausage' shaped pellets. Also contains wood chips and fibres.

Exit holes:
Few in number. Oval in shape (5mm x 3mm).

Life cycle: 3 to 4 years

- a. Adult: 10 – 20mm in length. Emerges July - September.
- b. Eggs: Laid in fan shaped pattern in cracks in wood. Oval white spindle shaped. Up to 200 laid.
- c. Larva: Feeds in sapwood for more than 4 years. Causes extensive damage. Reaches up to 30mm in length. Can be heard gnawing the wood especially during warm weather.
- d. Pupa: Takes place about 2 weeks prior to emergence.

Notes:
Damage can be confused with Forest Longhorn damage. Localised distribution around SE England.

Quick identification:
Large oval exit holes. Loose sausage shaped frass. Tunnels frequently oval and not individually identifiable. Ridges on surface of tunnels. Damage internally worse than it appears externally.

WOOD BORING BEEVILS (*Pentarthrum fulvum*, *Euphrosus confusus*)



Timber types attacked:
Any wood that is decayed in being conditions.

Damage:
Tunnels run along the grain just below surface, often breaking through the surface and exposed. Damage caused by both larvae and adults, both of which may be found in infested wood.

Bore dust:
Generally circular individual pellets.

Exit holes:
Narrow oval with an indented margin.

Life cycle: 7 to 8 months

- a. Adult: 3mm – 5mm in length. Live up to 10 months and feed on wood with larvae.
- b. Eggs: Laid about 4 days after mating. White, laid on or just below surface.
- c. Larva: Canned shape, white, bore extensively along grain. Present for 6-8 months. May grow up to 3.3 mm in length.
- d. Pupa: Develops just below surface.

Notes:
Where wood damage occurs it is a secondary problem, fungal decay is the primary concern. No specific treatment is necessary. Rectification of the fungal decay is all that is required.

Quick identification:
Ragged exit holes. Coarse circular bore dust. Tunnels run along grain often breaking the surface. Always in association with fungal decay.