

Pest Profile



Photo credits: Javier Mercado, Bark Beetle Genera of the U.S., USDA APHIS ITP, Bugwood.org
(*Pseudopityophthorus minutissimus*)

Common Name: Western Oak Bark Beetle (also called Oak bark beetle)

Scientific Name: *Pseudopityophthorus pubipennis*

Order and Family: Coleoptera, Curculionidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg		Small, oval, whitish
Larva/Nymph	1-2.5mm	Whitish, legless grubs
Adult	2.0 – 2.5mm	The adults are tiny reddish brown to black beetles, cylindrical, shiny. The pronotum and elytra are finely and densely punctate (marked with small depressions) and covered with fine hairs.
Pupa (if applicable)		Plump and whitish

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Chewing.

Host plant/s: The Oak bark beetles develop primarily in oak but may infest buckeye, beech, chestnut, hickory, birch, and maple. They are primarily common in the Pacific states and are not an aggressive species, limiting attacks to trees that are under stress or recently killed. *Pseudopityophthorus pubipennis* is reported throughout California from the coast to the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade Range. It occurs north to southern British Columbia, at least in the coastal zone. It is common on various oaks, including coast live, California black, and Oregon white oak, but has also been reported on tanoak, chestnut, and California buckeye.

Description of Damage: The oak bark beetle burrows through the bark of the coast live oak tree, usually drought stressed or recently wounded oaks, excavating shallow tunnels under the bark across the grain of wood while female beetles lay their eggs in the tunnels. They overwinter beneath the bark. Bleeding, frothy, bubbling holes with boring dust indicate damage. They primarily attack stressed trees.

References:

Cranshaw, W. (2004). *The Ultimate Guide to Backyard Bugs: Garden Insects of North America*. Princeton University Press.

Swiecki, T.J. and Bernhardt, E.A. (2006). *A field guide to insects and diseases of California oaks*. USDA Forest Service General Technical Report PSW-GTR-197, p. 1-156.