

Pest Profile



Photo credit: (Left) David Laughlin, Horticultural student, Bugwood.org; (Right) John .A. Davidson, Univ. Md, College Pk, Bugwood.org

Common Name: Dogwood Borer

Scientific Name: *Synanthedon scitula*

Order and Family: Lepidoptera, Sesiidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	0.6 mm	The eggs of the dogwood borer are small, oval, and are marked with a hexagonal pattern of slightly raised lines. The color of the eggs initially is a pale yellow but turns darker as they develop.
Larva	15 mm	The larvae of <i>S. scitula</i> are cream-colored with a reddish-brown head. The dark plate on top of the first thoracic segment (thoracic shield) contains two reddish-brown spots.
Adult	10-20 mm	The adult Dogwood borer is a clearwing moth that has a wasp-like body. Color of the body is bluish-black with a yellow band on the second and fourth abdominal segment. The fourth abdominal segment is wider on the female than it is on the male. The front wings are long and narrow while the hind wings are broad. The forewings may be absent of scales. The adults have wing coupling mechanisms that are similar to bee and wasp (Hymenoptera) adults.
Pupa (if applicable)	10 mm	The pupa is light brown in color and resides inside a cocoon made of silken thread and plant fragments mixed with excrement (frass).

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Larvae have chewing mouthparts.

Host/s: Dogwood borers have attacked a variety of ornamental, fruit, and nut trees. Although it is a primary pest of flowering dogwood and pecan, they can also attack apple, cherry, and other deciduous trees. Other hosts include American beech, black willow, blueberries, American chestnut, hickories/pecans, pines, mountain ash, hazel, birch, loquat, oaks, and elm.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): The larvae of *S. scitula* bore into the wood between the inner bark and wood. The parts infested with larvae appear swollen, knotty, calloused, or gall-like. The feeding by the larvae is mostly confined to the burr knot, but once the burr knot is consumed, they move to adjacent areas. The shedding of wood bark is an early symptom of larval attack. Other symptoms include sawdust-like frass being pushed out of the burrows, and leaves turning red prematurely. Although feeding on the burr knots usually does not harm the tree, it may allow entry for diseases. If the larvae begin to feed under the bark itself, then the tree could be girdled and die. In most cases, there needs to be several years of infestation before the tree begins to show declining growth and yield.

References:

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