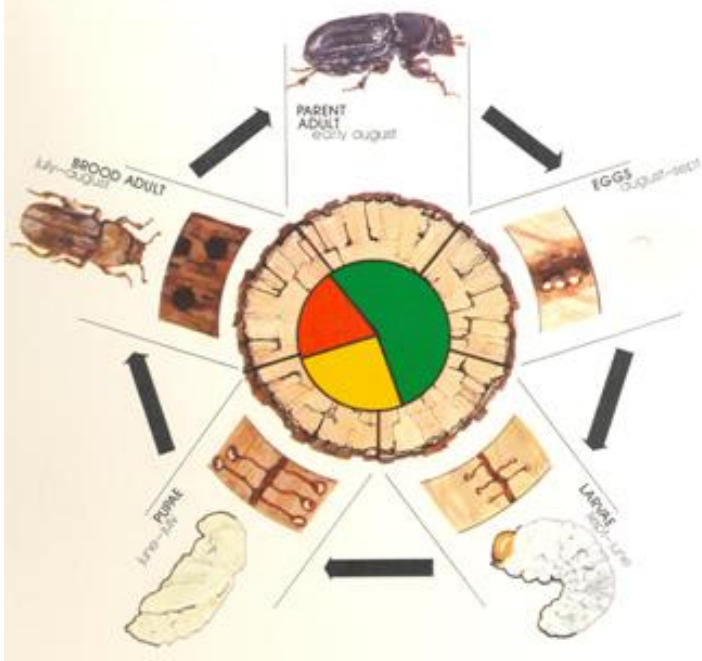


Bark Beetles



There are several hundred species of bark beetles in the United States. They are common pests of conifers and some attack broadleaf trees. Adults are small hard-bodied beetles about the size of a grain of rice. Most species are red, brown or black. They have strong, scooplike jaws for chewing. Infested trees show a buckshot pattern of holes where the new adults have emerged. The larva are off-white and grublike with a dark head.



Females lay small, oval, whitish eggs at the interface of the bark and wood. After eggs hatch, the tiny larvae mine galleries that branch out from the egg-laying gallery. Adults can emerge at any time of the year but are most common in late spring and late summer. After emergence adults generally disperse to attack susceptible trees elsewhere. The beetles mine the inner bark on trunks of trees and shrubs. This activity often starts a flow of tree pitch in conifers and is accompanied by a sawdustlike material (frass). Frass accumulates in bark crevices or may drop and be visible on the ground. Bark beetles commonly attack trees weakened or predisposed to infestation by drought, disease, injuries or other factors which stress the tree. The beetles contribute to the decline and eventual death of the tree but are usually not the initial cause.



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