

More Pests for Timber – the Lyctid Borer



Consumers and the building industry are very aware of the damage that termites can inflict though there are other timber pests that can also cause major structural problems. These include the European House Borer in Perth and the Lyctid Borer. This article looks at the Lyctid Borer.

The most common Lyctid in Australia is Lyctus Bruness. However there are Lyctids which are not of the Lyctus genus and hence the preference for the term 'Lyctid' rather than Lyctus as a general description.

The Lyctid Borer only attacks the sapwood of susceptible hardwoods. The pores of the hardwood must be of sufficient diameter for the beetle to insert her egg laying apparatus and hence many hardwoods are not attacked.

If the sapwood is high in starch it is likely to be completely devoured with the production of a finely powdered, cream coloured frass. Practically all the damage is caused by the larva but the adult beetle also bores an exit hole.

In Australia, attack is common in most areas except Tasmania and eastern Victoria. In Queensland and New South Wales, the rain forest trees are often susceptible to borer attack and it was found necessary to introduce legislation to control the sale of these timbers with sapwood susceptible to Lyctid Borers.

(Ref: Keith Bootle Wood in Australia.)