



Raspberry Cane Borer

Introduction

Though damage from the raspberry cane borer is often seen, the insect itself is rarely recognized as a pest. It usually causes only slight or occasional injury, although, when abundant, it can cause considerable damage. It is easy to control.

Description

The adult cane borer is a slender, black beetle with long, black antennae, black head and yellow prothorax. Adults are about one half an inch long. The larvae are legless, light-colored borers found within the stem. Fully grown larvae are about 3/4 inch long.

Life Cycle

This insect has a two-year life cycle. Adults emerge beginning in June and females lay eggs in the pith of new raspberry growth, about six inches from the tip of the cane. The female beetle then makes two rows of punctures around the cane, one just above and one just below the egg-laying point. This causes the tip of the new cane to wilt. The egg hatches in early July and the larva burrows slowly down the cane, passing the first winter within an inch or two of the girdle. During the second year the larva burrows down to the crown and passes the second winter at or below ground level. It completes its development the following spring and pupates in the soil.



Cane borer damage

Control

Chemicals are not necessary to control this pest. Cut girdled canes an inch or so below the girdle and burn them soon after cane borer damage appears. Attacked canes wilt, making the damage easy to spot. Eliminating wild raspberries nearby will reduce damage. Since the life cycle requires two years to complete, regular pruning usually keeps the population in check.

Reviewed and amended by Dr. Alan Eaton, UNH Cooperative Extension Entomology Specialist, 9/00

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