Deodar Weevil

DW041017

IMPORTANCE: All native southeastern pines of all ages are susceptible to attack by the deodar weevil (*Pissodes nemorensis*). Common hosts are loblolly, longleaf, shortleaf, slash, spruce and sand pines. Trees that are dying or extremely stressed by environmental conditions such as fire, drought, excessive cold, fusiform rust, and wind damage are often attacked.
Young pines in overstocked stands are also quite susceptible. Often, a deodar weevil infestation is in conjunction with a bark beetle attack. Wounds created by the deodar weevil can allow the pitch canker fungus to enter infested stems. Trees are usually sporadically attacked and mortality is generally low.

IDENTIFICATION: Adults have a long curved snout and are reddish-brown to gray with two gray or white spots on their back. Adults are typically 6-8 mm (¼ inch) long. The legless larvae are white with a light amber to dark orange head. They can be 6-12 mm long when mature. The pupae are very similar in size to adults, but they are creamy white, darkening as they complete the developmental stage. Small circular escape holes are sometimes noticed on infested stems. Some infested shoots may die, causing excessive branching. These dead shoots will exemplify brown scorched needles.

HABITS: Adult deodar weevils are active in the autumn and winter months. During the autumn months, adult weevils infest stressed trees, feed and mate. Females lay eggs while feeding in the inner bark. Larvae emerge from eggs and continue to feed in the inner bark where they make chambers commonly referred to as ‘chip cocoons”. Deodar weevils pupate in these cocoons from late winter to early spring. In spring from March to April, adult weevils emerge from pupation. Deodar weevils are usually inactive in hot summer months. There is one generation per year.

CONTROL: There are several options for controlling the deodar weevil, but the primary recommendation is to maintain tree vigor. The silvicultural practice of thinning overstocked stands is the most effective method for reducing the risk of a deodar weevil attack. Biological agents like predatory insects can reduce the deodar weevil’s population. Applying an approved insecticide on recently attacked and neighboring trees is also a viable control option. An insecticide application is not very practical on infested trees in a rural forest stand.

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