

PEACH TWIG BORER *Lepidoptera: Gelechiidae Anarsia lineatella*

DESCRIPTION

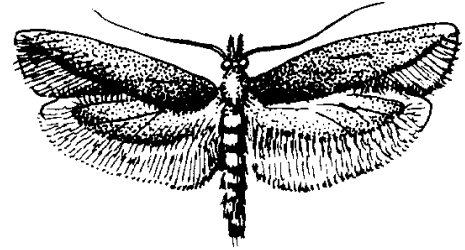
Adults are steel gray, and mottled with white and dark scales on the front wings. The wingspan is 15 to 18 mm. **Larvae** are reddish-brown or chocolate colored and about 10 to 12 mm long when mature. Mature larvae are marked with light colored bands encircling each abdominal segment.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE

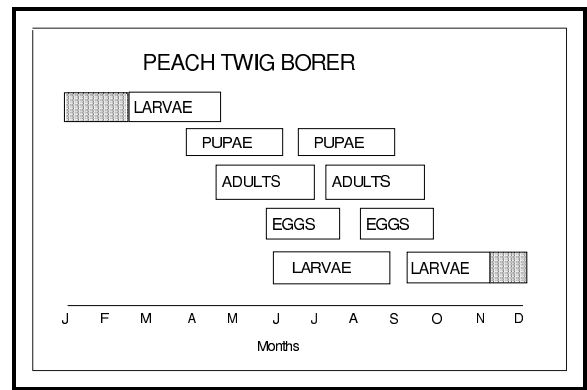
Larvae feed in the tips of developing twigs and burrow down tender shoots of peaches and nectarines killing them back 7 to 10 cm. Evidence of borer attack in the spring can be recognized by wilted shoots on terminal growth. This damage is particularly serious in nursery stock and young trees. Later in the season, larvae enter the fruit often destroying the pit and causing severe losses of marketable fruit. Larvae also may feed on the surface of prunes and plums.

DISTRIBUTION AND LIFE HISTORY

The peach twig borer is distributed throughout North America and in the northwest where peaches are grown. In addition to peaches, this pest attacks apricot, nectarine, cherry, prune, plum, and apple. The peach twig borer overwinters as a partly grown larva in silk-lined hibernacula beneath loose bark, in crotches, and in similar protected places. In constructing hibernacula, the larvae cast out frass in small piles (sometimes called chimneys) which mark the overwintering site. Larvae begin feeding on twigs in April about the time leaf buds open. Larvae feed within twigs for one to three weeks and are usually mature by mid-May. Pupation occurs in a wound or crack in the tree. Adults emerge in late May and early June and deposit small white eggs on the leaves, twigs, or young fruit. Larvae feed in twigs or developing fruit until late July when pupation occurs. Adults emerge in August and deposit eggs for a second generation. Larvae feed during the fall before entering the overwintering stage. There are usually two generations each year, but in the northern areas of its distribution, there may be only one generation each year.



(after USDA)



MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Unkept orchards or abandoned trees are a constant source of reinfestation when they are near a commercial orchard. Cultural practices such as pruning and destroying infested twigs can help reduce the larval population; however, insecticides are most frequently used to control this pest. An adult trapping system using the sex pheromone of the peach twig borer has been developed and should be used to time sprays with adult emergence (late May and early June). Delayed dormant cover sprays with oil may help reduce the population of overwintering larvae, and sprays applied at petal fall control larvae as they emerge and enter twigs.