

Official Pest Reports

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Detection of the European wood wasp, *Sirex noctilio* (Fabricius) in New York

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Contact: Not available

On February 19, 2005, a single European wood wasp, *Sirex noctilio*, was identified in a sample collected as part of the New York State Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey National Exotic Wood Borer and Bark Beetle Survey, by E. R. Hoebeke, Ph.D. (Cornell University). It was confirmed by the Systematic Entomology Laboratory in Beltsville, MD on February 23, 2005. This female wasp was collected on September 7, 2004, from a Lindgren funnel trap placed among "mixed hardwoods and pine" just inside a forest edge adjacent to a recreational field at Fulton, NY (Oswego County). The detection of a single female *S. noctilio* in a warehouse was previously reported in the United States on July 22, 2002. It was found at the Otis Elevator Co. in Bloomington, Indiana by Otis Elevator staff and was verified as *S. noctilio* by the Systematic Entomology Laboratory (SEL), Beltsville MD on August 01, 2002. No other detections were made in the follow-up survey in that area. On November 11, 2003, *S. noctilio* was added to the APHIS Regulated Plant Pest List.

Sirex noctilio is considered a secondary pest of trees in its native range. In addition to its preferred hosts, *Pinus* spp. (pines), *S. noctilio* will use *Picea* (spruce), *Abies* (fir), *Larix* (larch), and *Pseudotsuga menziesii* (Douglas fir). *S. noctilio* has a mutualistic relationship with a fungus, *Amylostereum areolatum*. The vectored fungus, *A. areolatum* and the mucus injected by *S. noctilio* rapidly weaken host trees, rendering them susceptible to larval feeding. *Sirex noctilio* is endemic to Europe, Asia, and northern Africa and has successfully established in South Africa, South America, Australia and New Zealand. Based on its native range in Europe and Asia, *S. noctilio* could establish in any climate zone of North America where pine occurs. This pest is attracted to stressed trees that are often used to make solid wood packing material (SWPM). Since the life cycle can take a year or more, the insect could be transported easily in pallets or other SWPM and not be detected at a port. In South Africa, Australia and South America where pine is cultivated in plantations, *S. noctilio* causes significant tree mortality and is considered a major pest.

Sirex noctilio New Pest Response Guidelines are completed in draft and are due for publication shortly. This information is available for dissemination to industry and the public, as well as for use by state regulatory agencies. APHIS will coordinate with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the United States Forest Service to conduct surveys for symptoms and the presence of life stages that may demonstrate establishment, to define the areas that may be affected by this pest, and to develop an appropriate regulatory response.