

# Longhorn Beetle Tree Borers

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Round-headed Borer – Photo Credit Forest & Kim Starr

A recent help desk call led our Master Gardeners in a search for a Monkey Pod, *Albizia saman* aka *Acacia propinqua*, tree borer. Our efforts found that most trees in the *Acacia* family share two boring pests, the larvae of the *Indarbela quadrinotata* moth and the larvae of the *Xystrocera globosa* longhorn beetle. This month's article focuses on the Monkey Pod, round-headed, longhorn beetle tree borer.

Adult longhorn tree borer beetles vary from approximately 15-32 mm long. The head has prominent antennae nearly as long as the body. Their elongated body is reddish brown. They have distinctive yellow elytra with a metallic blue or green longitudinal band. The white pupae have an ordinary longicorn shape.

The legless larvae (grubs) vary in size from 30 to 60 mm long at maturity. The larval head and body are yellowish to creamy white with a small dark head and very prominent black mouthparts.

The round-headed monkey pod boring beetles attack stressed trees with grubs making large galleries in the sapwood. The galleries comprise two sections. The pre-pupal section is at a right or obtuse angle to the outer bark at least halfway through the bark. The pupal section is usually within the sapwood running parallel to the bark.

Tree vigor and health minimizes the possibility of borer infestation. Sanitation is crucial not only to pest control but also to preclude further tree damage from disease. Promptly dispose of material infested by borers. Remove and destroy trees severely infested by borers. Galleries are usually free of frass and thus amenable to effective fumigation. Fumigation is expensive and is normally reserved for very valued trees. When the pests are within these galleries, spray insecticides are ineffective. One reference suggests that it may be possible to skewer the grub with a stiff thin wire. This tends to be confirmed knowing that these grubs are considered delicacies in some areas of the world. References disagree on the effectiveness of systemic insecticides. As adults, these beetles are nocturnal and control is difficult.



Round-headed Borer Larva – Photo credit Michael Bohne

<http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/uhmg/Maui/downloads/MauiGardening-Fall2012.pdf>