

# CARPENTERWORM—*Prionoxystus robiniae*

**HOSTS:** Ash, oak, black locust, elm, maple, willow, cottonwood and other poplars, and occasionally fruit trees and ornamental shrubs

**IDENTIFICATION, LIFE CYCLE, AND DAMAGE:** Mature larvae are about 75 mm long and pinkish-white with dark heads. The moths are stout-bodied with gray and brown mottled wings. Females are larger than males and have a wingspan of 75 mm.

Larvae mine the wood of the trunk leaving a maze of tunnels 20 to 25 mm in diameter. Sawdust may accumulate at entrance holes to the tunnels and at the bases of trees. Moth flight varies from May through mid-July in the Southern Plains and from mid-June through July in the Northern Plains. Eggs are laid in bark cracks, crevices, and wounds and hatch in 10–14 days. Two to three years are required to complete a generation.

Branches or entire trees may be killed. High winds or heavy snow may break off branches that have been weakened by larval tunnels.

**CONTROL:** Spray the trunk below 3 m with methoxychlor or chlorpyrifos during the spring or summer to prevent initial attack by larvae. Repeat two to three times at 2- to 3-week intervals. A commercially available male attractant, (Z,E)-3,5 tetradecadienyl acetate, can be used to monitor moth flight and determine the optimum time for insecticide application. Kill older larvae by injecting lindane, endosulfan, chlorpyrifos, or diazinon directly into the tunnels and sealing the tunnel entrances. To prevent adult emergence, wrap the trunk of infested trees with burlap or paper. Remove and burn heavily infested trees before the adults emerge. Decrease the probability of a successful attack by maintaining high tree vigor through watering, fertilizing, or other silvicultural practices.



Carpenterworm damage



Carpenterworm larva