

Photo: Steven Valley



Sirex Woodwasp



Female sirex woodwasps have a long structure for laying eggs. Photo: Dennis Hauden, Bugwood.org



An adult sirex woodwasp. Photo: Steven Valley, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Bugwood.org

What Is It?

The sirex woodwasp (*Sirex noctilio*) is a species of wasp native to Eurasia and northern Africa. It primarily attacks pine trees (sometimes also spruce and fir trees), laying its eggs along with a symbiotic fungus and toxic mucus that kill the tree. The larvae tunnel through the wood, eventually emerging as adults.

Is It Here Yet?

No, but established populations live in the eastern United States.

Why Should I Care?

Native woodwasps only attack dead or dying trees, but the sirex woodwasp will attack healthy trees. Populations of Washington's native pines and other conifers could suffer severe damage from a sirex woodwasp infestation.

What Are Its Characteristics?

- 0.5-1.5 inches long as an adult.
- Cylindrical body, spear-shaped plate at the end of the abdomen, black antennae.
- Females: metallic blue head and body, orange legs, long spikey egg-laying structure (called an ovipositor).
- Males: metallic blue head and thorax, orange and black abdomen.





WASHINGTON STATE
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Washington Invasive
Species Council

Sirex Woodwasp

How Do I Distinguish It From Native Species?

There are many native species of woodwasp that look very similar to the sirex woodwasp. Species are best identified by an entomologist. If you have a suspected sirex woodwasp, contact your local Washington State University Extension agent, the Washington State Department of Agriculture, or the Washington Department of Natural Resources.

How Can We Stop It?

The sirex woodwasp was introduced through imported wood products. Avoid moving firewood far from the area where you bought it. Visit this website for more information: <https://invasivespecies.wa.gov/campaigns/buy-it-where-you-burn-it/>

What Should I Do If I Find One?

Report immediately via the WA Invasives mobile app or reporting web form at <https://invasivespecies.wa.gov/report-a-sighting/>.



An adult sirex woodwasp. Photo: Steven Valley, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Bugwood.org