



Photo by David Cappert



# Emerald Ash Borer



Trunk damage. Photo: Art Wagner

## What Is It?

The emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) is a small Asian, wood-boring beetle that may attack and kill ash trees. The larvae burrow under the tree's bark and eat the sapwood. These damaged layers of tissue below the bark are critical to transporting water and nutrients throughout the tree. Once damaged, the layers can't transport water and nutrients causing the leaves and tree to die gradually.



Adult beetle. Photo: David Cappert

## Is It Here Yet?

No, but it is very close. They are established elsewhere in North America. This invasive insect was recently detected in Oregon and British Columbia.

## Why Should I Care?

The emerald ash borer has killed hundreds of millions of ash trees in North America and gradually is moving westward all the time. It could devastate Washington's forests and sensitive riparian areas. In addition, the potential costs of lengthy quarantines or replacing countless dead trees after could be hefty.

## What Are Its Characteristics?

- Adults are a jewel-like metallic green.
- Elongated narrow shape, about a half-inch long.



Emerald ash borer larvae. Photo: Houping Liu

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[Invasivespecies.wa.gov](http://Invasivespecies.wa.gov)

- Woodpeckers eat emerald ash borer larvae, so heavy woodpecker damage on an ash tree is a possible sign of infestation.
- When the new adult emerges from the tree trunk in the spring, it leaves a D-shaped exit hole that is rounder on one side and flatter on the other.

## How Do I Distinguish It From Native Species?

There are many native species that look like emerald ash borer. Visit the Washington Invasive Species Council's Emerald Ash Borer Look-alike Guide for assistance: <https://invasivespecies.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/WA-EAB-look-alike-guide.pdf>

## How Can We Stop It?

Emerald ash borers may be transported in wooden materials such as shipping pallets, logs, and firewood. If you are outside of Washington, never bring back items capable of containing this, and do not transport wood, including firewood for camping, from the area where it was harvested. Instead, buy firewood when you get to your camping destination.

## What Should I Do If I Find One?

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



Emerald ash borer larva. Photo: PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources