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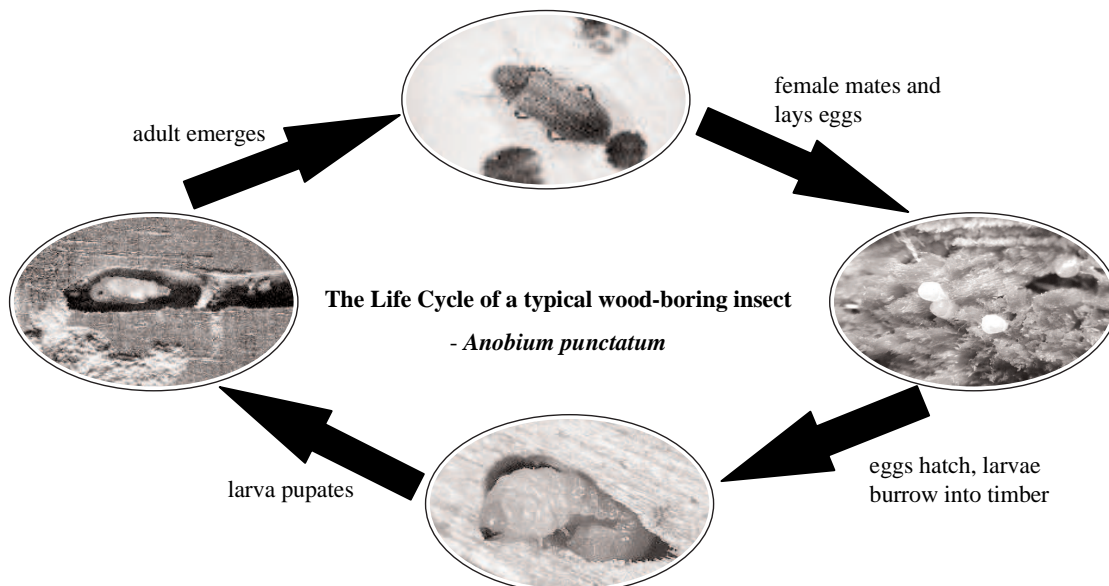
TREATING WOOD-BORING INSECTS

All **wood-boring insects** have a similar life cycle, although there are variations in its duration, the type of wood attacked and the extent of damage caused.

Whichever insect species is involved, the **wood-boring insect treatment** principles are the same:

- Locate the damaged or infested timbers.
- Identify the insect.
- Determine whether the infestation is active or not. Fresh “flight” or “exit” holes are a sure sign that live insects are present; bore dust on or below the timber is also an indicator, although building vibration can sometimes dislodge the dust from old and extinct infestations.
- Determine the extent of repair or replacement for timbers which have become structurally unsound.
- Decide on the type and extent of insecticidal treatment for the remaining timbers.

All insecticidal treatments are designed to eradicate or disrupt at least one stage in the insect’s life cycle. This should cause the infestation to die out within a few years. For long-term protection against re-infestation, enough insecticide must remain in the surface layers of timber to prevent any future attacks from becoming established.



Treatment details

Treating furniture

1. Excess dirt and dust must be removed from all wooden surfaces and upholstery, and covers (if applicable) should be removed to expose the bare wood. Where drawers and shelves are present it is recommended that these are removed.
2. An approved insecticide should be applied as directed to the infested woodwork. Particular attention should be paid to plywood and to such areas as the inside surfaces of drawers, the under surfaces of tables and dressers, the underside of feet and all cracks and crevices. Primarily, these are the sites where the eggs of wood-boring insects are laid and where subsequent infestations could originate. Heavily infested wood should be removed and replaced as soon as possible. All flight holes should be treated with an approved insecticide.
3. Insecticidal fluids are generally not recommended for varnished, French polished or similar non-absorbent surfaces. These are best left alone, or given regular applications of a good wax polish, some types of which contain small amounts of insecticide for extra protection. Alternatively, it may be appropriate to have the item professionally fumigated, e.g. if it is a valuable antique.
4. No attempt should be made for several weeks following the treatment to stand treated furniture on such items as carpets, without first placing a protective material, such as hardboard or stout polythene sheeting, under the feet.
5. Whenever possible, it is advisable to avoid using treated furniture for 2 to 3 weeks after treatment. Cupboards, drawers and other enclosed spaces should be left open and well-ventilated during this period.
6. Beehives and bee-keeping equipment should **never** be treated with insecticides.

Treating structural and joinery timbers

1. Dusty or dirty timbers must be thoroughly cleaned to expose the timber surface. An approved insecticide should then be applied to all accessible surfaces. With comparatively non-absorbent timbers (or where only one surface is accessible), the treatment should also involve the injection of insecticide into flight holes.
2. Where House Longhorn Beetle (*Hylotrupes bajulus*) is involved, special care must be taken to test timbers for structural soundness
3. Wood-boring weevils are normally associated with damp and decaying timber. Treatment should therefore include removal of the damp source and fungal infection.
4. Where bats are roosting in roof spaces, or other structures, permission to treat wood-boring insects must first be obtained from English Nature, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Countryside Council of Wales or the Department of the Environment (Belfast).