

Cherry Bark Tortrix

Identification, Biology and Management

The cherry bark tortrix (CBT), *Enarmonia formosana*, is an introduced caterpillar pest in western North America and is found in coastal areas from British Columbia south to parts of Oregon. This pest can attack any Rosaceous host, but is most commonly found on various species and varieties of cherry, plum, and apple. In Europe, the pest is described as preferentially attacking older trees, but in North America it attacks all age classes. This pest can kill trees outright through girdling, or can leave them susceptible to secondary disease and insect problems.



Adult CBT moth

Appearance and life cycle- The CBT caterpillar is 8-11mm in length with a gray to flesh colored body and a yellowish-brown head. First instar larvae feed on bark and outer sapwood, while the 2nd through 5th instars tunnel and feed between the bark and cambium. The larvae also overwinter under the bark. Adult wingspan ranges from 15-18mm, and the wings have characteristic yellow, orange, and white markings. Eggs are laid near wounds where newly hatched larvae begin to feed. There is one generation of the CBT each year.

Damage- Damage is caused as the larvae feed and bore beneath the bark. High populations of the CBT will girdle the tree, and infested trees will also be more susceptible to other insect and disease problems, as well as being more prone to freezing injury. Symptoms include cracked bark, swelling, and heavy gummosis that is mixed with frass and silk. A general decline of the crown, often limited to the side that is heavily attacked, may be observed. Attacks are normally initiated at wounds, graft or branch unions, poor pruning cuts, or other natural bark cracks. Feeding and boring by the larvae also results in frass tubes.

Control- Cultural control methods including planting of resistant species and varieties can reduce populations, although there has been little success with biological control. Applications of chemical control products can be very successful if timing of application coincides with the time of year that larvae are tending frass tubes, which normally occurs from late-September through early October. Naturally derived products such as Spinosad (Conserve) or Bt-based products will be effective with proper timing.



Typical CBT frass tube