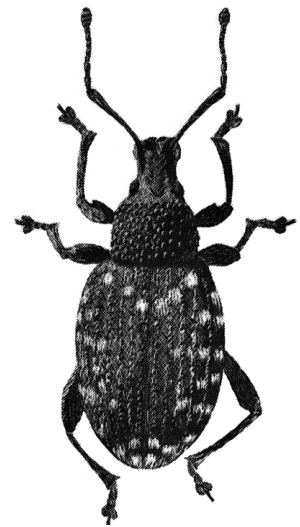


# *Black Vine Weevil*

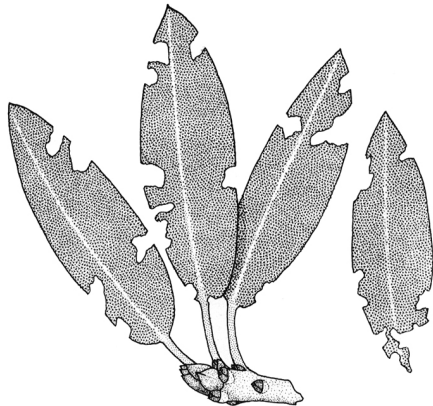
## *Identification, Biology and Management*

The black vine weevil (*Otiorhynchus sulcatus* L), also known as the Taxus weevil, is widely distributed throughout the northern half of the United States, where it is a serious pest of ornamentals on the landscape and in nurseries. The black vine weevil feeds on over 100 species of woody and herbaceous plants, with **Taxus (yew), Rhododendron and azalea** being preferred hosts. The adult weevil feeds on the foliage, causing distinct, easily recognizable notches in the leaf margin. Feeding injury by the adult seldom is detrimental to the plant. Larva of the black vine weevil inhabits the soil, where they feed on the root system of their hosts. Heavy populations of larvae can destroy much of the root system, causing observable symptoms ranging from growth reduction and small, chlorotic leaves to sudden death of the plant.

**DESCRIPTION:** Adults are black and approximately 3/8" long. The thorax is covered with raised spots (tubercles), and the wing covers are mottled in white. Newly emerged adults may be light brown. The larva is a legless grub, approximately 3/8" long and white with a brown head.



**Black Vine Weevil Adult**



**Feeding Damage**

**LIFE CYCLE:** The black vine weevil overwinters as larvae in the soil. Larvae feed on roots of their host in late summer through fall and then burrow deeper in the soil as cold weather approaches.

In early spring, the grubs resume feeding and much of the damage to the root system occurs at this time because the larvae are large. Pupation occurs in the soil in mid-to-late May and adults emerge in June. The wing covers on adults are fused and subsequently, it does not fly.

The black vine weevil feeds on host foliage only at night and usually remains in the "duff" (mulch) beneath their host during the day. Adults feed for several weeks before they begin laying eggs. One generation occurs each year.

**CONTROL:** Black vine weevil populations can be maintained below damaging levels with insecticidal sprays applied when adult are actively feeding but before egg laying begins. An application in mid-June followed by a second application in early July generally provides optimum control.