

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

BALSAM WOOLLY ADELGID

(*Adelges piceae*)

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS ANIMAL?

DESCRIPTION

Balsam Woolly Adelgids...

- Are tiny, spherical insects measuring less than 1 mm long.
- Are black-purple in colour.
- Are covered with a white wool-like mass (adult females produce the wool to protect their eggs during summer and fall).
- Have orange oval eggs, visible using a magnifying glass.
- Can be found on growing tips of tree branches and on tree trunks/stems.

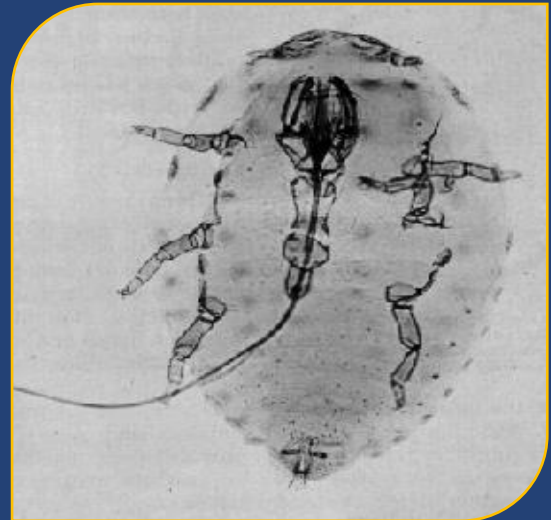


Photo Credit: USFS, Wikipedia Commons

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

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PRIMARY THREAT:

Balsam Woolly Adelgids damage their host trees, true firs (Abies species), causing growth distortion, stunting, and even tree death. As a result, this insect can cause significant damage to natural seed production, as well as the timber and Christmas tree industries.

SPREAD

Adelgids are like aphids in their appearance and biology. Eggs and juveniles can be carried on clothing, vehicles, outdoor equipment, birds and animals to new locations. Natural dispersal by juveniles occurs, as they can crawl short distances from hatch site to a new location and are often transported long distance by the wind. Their spread is intensified by the fact that females perform asexual reproduction, producing 90-10,000 offspring during their lifespan. No males are produced.

Balsam Woolly Adelgids can be found on true fir trees in natural forests, planted forests, and urban areas. Host trees can be landscape trees, farmed trees, and naturally regenerated firs. Low elevation sites with good growing conditions (adequate water and nutrition) tend to receive the worst impacts, but high elevation forests can also be devastated by this pest.



Female and eggs, protective fluff removed
Photo Credit: BC Government

For more information: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/animals-and-crops/plant-health/insects-and-plant-diseases/nursery-and-ornamentals/balsam-woolly-adelgid>



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DISTRIBUTION & STATUS

Balsam Woolly Adelgids are native to central Europe and have become established in many parts of North America. Balsam Woolly Adelgids are established in coastal forest zones of B.C., including the Fraser Valley and Vancouver Island, Cascades Forest District (Coquihalla area), the town of Rossland and surrounding area. This species is also found in the interior of BC, east to Nelson and north to Horsefly in the Cariboo region.

LOOK-ALIKES:

No other insects cause growth distortion to the twigs or growing points in the same manner to true firs as the balsam Woolly Adelgid. *Pineus abietinus*, another Adelgid, looks similar but does not cause damage. The balsam twig aphid (*Mindarus abietinus*) can cause twisting of needles but not swelling or distortion of twigs.



Photo Credit: BC Government

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WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Obtain true fir seedlings and trees from clean, local sources.
- Limit movement of equipment and staff from infested areas, as Adelgids can hitch a ride undetected.
- Raise awareness to avoid further spread in B.C.

Removal:

- Remove and appropriately dispose of infested trees by chipping or burning on site.

DID YOU KNOW?

Balsam Woolly Adelgids depend on host trees for growth and development. After an egg hatches, the first generation (instar) crawls to a suitable location on the tree. It begins feeding by inserting its stylet (probe) into the tree, remaining there while it molts several times into an adult.



Effects of Balsam Woolly Adelgids on branch.
Photo Credit: USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org

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