

Tree-killing beetle found in California

July 15 2005

The Asian Longhorned Beetle, an imported pest that has devoured trees in the New York area, recently turned up at a Sacramento warehouse.

The beetles apparently traveled from China in packing crates used for a shipment of decorative building stone, the Sacramento Bee reported.

Pat Minyard of the California Department of Food and Agriculture said that a squad of smoke jumpers has been brought in to go tree to tree around the warehouse to check for the beetles. Making sure no beetles have gotten loose is expected to take at least a year and cost \$800,000, he said.

"One of the things I find frightening about this pest is the eradication method, chopping down trees and chipping them," Minyard said.

The beetles' larvae burrow into trees and eventually destroy the cambium, the layer that carries food and water from roots to leaves. While they prefer maples and elms, the beetles can use any kind of hardwood and could cause havoc if loose in California's fruit groves.

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