



Pest of the Week: INSECT

Goldspotted Oak Borer (*Agrilus auroguttatus*)



Fig. A. Adults. (Image by Tom Coleman, U.S. Forest Service)

Common Name: Gold Spotted Oak Borer, GSOB, Goldspotted Oak Borer

Scientific Name: *Agrilus auroguttatus*

This insect belongs to a family known as Jewel Beetles, because many members are brightly colored. It is also referred to as a Buprestid beetle.

Description: A small, bullet-shaped beetle (18 mm long and 3 mm wide) with dark colored head, thorax (middle) and elytra (wings) that have symmetrical gold yellow spots (Fig. A). Adults leave 3 mm “D shaped” holes when they leave the tree (Fig. B). Leaves become sparse (Fig. C). There is staining of the bark from wounds left by the adults and the feeding larvae (Fig. D). Red Oak is the preferred host, but California Black, Coast Live and Coast Canyon Oaks, have also been used.

Look-A-Likes: *Agrilus coxalis*, also called GSOB and originally thought to be the cause of oak mortality in California. This species is from South America and Guatemala. *A. auroguttatus* is from the US southwest/Arizona/northern Mexico. The two species look the same to the untrained eye.

How, When and Where it Arrived: First find was in 2007 in San Diego County’s Cleveland Forest, and in 2012, Riverside County. It is believed GSOB was moved to San Diego in firewood.

Why This Species is Not Welcome: Both adults and larvae damage trees during its lifecycle (it takes a full year from egg to egg). Adults hatch in spring, mate and lay eggs in oak trees. The larvae burrow through the cambium tissue and destroy an oak’s ability to grow. The adults feed on leaves. GSOB kills valuable oak trees, which are of monetary value for the lumber, the habitat anchors in the environment and a preferred landscape tree that increase home values.



B.



C.



D.

Figures B (“D shape” hole), C (crown dieback), and D (bark staining). (Images by Tom Coleman, U.S. Forest Service)

I Saw One! Report any combination of symptoms or signs to:

- County agricultural commissioner contact list: www.cdfa.ca.gov/exec/county/countymap/
- University of California Extension Offices: http://ucanr.edu/county_offices
- Report a Pest App: www.whatisthisbug.org/apps.html

More information available at:

- California Firewood Task Force: www.firewood.ca.gov
- Don’t Move Firewood: www.dontmovefirewood.org