

Outbreak of *Premnobius* (Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Scolytinae) in *Eucalyptus* plantations in Minas Gerais, Brazil

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Bark and ambrosia beetles (Curculionidae: Scolytinae) are usually secondary species, attacking mainly stressed host plants. Records of attacks of these borers on *Eucalyptus* trees date back to when they were introduced into Brazil. The objective of this research was to report a massive outbreak of *Premnobius cavipennis* and *P. vitiosus* in Bocaiúva, Minas Gerais, Brazil. In Oct2017 in a plantation of mature clones of *Eucalyptus urophylla*, 703 ha caught on fire, representing ca. 11% of the whole reforestation, spreading also to the surrounding native vegetation. In the burnt stands, the majority of the trees were severely damaged or killed by the fire, providing large amounts of suitable breeding material for *Premnobius*. The scolytine population built up in the burnt eucalypt stands and native vegetation. Circa five months later, residents at communities within a 2-km radius of the burnt stands started noticing the presence of the beetles. In the beginning populations were low, but they quickly built up to huge numbers, invading houses at dusk, boring into house utensils, provisions, car fuel hoses, and becoming a dire nuisance to the locals. At least 14 plant species were recorded as being also attacked by the scolytine, including even rangpur lime fruits. In July 2018 we surveyed the burnt eucalypt stands, when we randomly examined 50 trees - 6% were healthy, 76% had dead crown and were sprouting and 18% were dead. Of these, 92% were attacked. Attack intensity was low for 78%, intermediate for 12% and high for 2% of the evaluated trees; 8% of trees were non-attacked. One attacked tree of each of the three phytosanitary conditions was felled and pinholes were counted at 2-m intervals. Pinholes were distributed from the bottom to the upper bole in all three trees, but in higher numbers at 10-12 m in the live tree, 6-8 m in tree with dead crown, and at 0-2 m in the dead tree. Control measures, mainly in eucalypt stands, must be taken to mitigate the current situation.

Palavras-chave: ambrosia beetle; attack intensity; *Premnobius vitiosus*

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