



POWDER POST BEETLES

By

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Life History and Habits

Powder post beetles are second only to termites as destroyers of seasoned wood. Several species of these beetles cause similar damage and require the same control measures. Among the most common of the powder post beetles are *Lyctus* beetles.

These insects live in dried wood and are apt to destroy hard-woods used for furniture, flooring, wooden ornaments, tool handles and interior structural finishing. Usually the first indication of a powder post beetle infestation is the appearance of small piles of fine, flour-like powder on or near the infested part. Here the surface of wood infested is perforated with numbers of small 'shot holes' each about pin head size or larger. Any slight jarring of the wood causes the sawdust to sift from these holes. When in-

festated timbers are cut or broken, the interior may have been converted into a mass of this finely packed powder held together by a thin outer shell and a few intervening fibers of sound wood.

The eggs of powder post beetles are laid in the pores of wood. The young larvae or grubs that hatch from these eggs find a desirable location and begin to feed on the solid dry wood. The larvae cut irregular winding galleries into the wood. As they progress, they pack the finely pulverized frass behind them in the tunnel. They pass the winter in the larval stage; however, both larvae and adults may be present. Adult beetles cut their way to the outside to emerge, mate and lay eggs. The life cycle lasts about one year.

Control

Powder post beetles may be controlled by thoroughly spraying or painting infested wood with five per cent Pentachlorophenol directly upon the infested area. *The surface being treated must be thoroughly wet.* Pentachlorophenol has such a penetrating quality that one application is usually sufficient. The five per cent solution is usually safe for hardwood floors and other finished surfaces without any great danger of marring the finish.

One gallon of spray will cover about 250 square feet of rough surface, such as joists and sub-flooring, and up to 450 square feet of finished surface.

CAUTION: VARIOUS SOLVENTS USED IN DILUTING PENTACHLOROPHENOL WILL BURN. CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST A FIRE HAZARD FOR A FEW DAYS FOLLOWING TREATMENT.

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