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Behind the Blaze: Ecological Impact of Bark Beetles and Wildfire Dynamics in Coniferous Forests

Vidya Madhuri E[1], Rupali J S[1], Hemant Kumar[1], Sweta Verma[1], Keerthika N[1], Sharan SP[2], Rajna S[1]*, Sagar D[3]*

[1]Division of Entomology, ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi-110012, India.
[2]Division of Agricultural Physics, ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi-110012, India.
[3]Division of Genomic Resources, ICAR- National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources, Bengaluru-560024, India.

ABSTRACT

Forests are complex ecosystems essential for human well-being and environmental sustainability, providing timber, fuelwood, fiber, and non-wood products while combating desertification, safeguarding watersheds, maintaining biodiversity, and sequestering carbon dioxide. However, these ecosystems face significant threats from insect pests and diseases, particularly bark beetles (Dendroctonus spp.), which disrupt forest health and functionality. Bark beetles, part of the Scolytinae subfamily, attack stressed or weakened trees, leading to economic losses and increased wildfire risks. Climate change exacerbates bark beetle outbreaks by altering beetle physiology and forest conditions, as evidenced by the 2013 outbreak from Mexico to Alaska. Beetle-infested trees contribute to intense wildfires due to altered fuel characteristics. Understanding the intricate interactions between bark beetles, forest health, and wildfire dynamics is crucial for effective forest management. The complexity of these interactions and the variability in beetle responses to environmental stressors pose significant challenges. Additionally, gaps remain in comprehending the precise impact of beetle outbreaks on wildfire behaviors and forest resilience. This review integrates ecological insights, management practices, and policy frameworks to address these issues, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach in forest management. Trees deploy physical and chemical defenses against beetle attacks, including resin production. However, environmental stressors like drought can weaken these defenses, enabling beetle infestations. Symbiotic associations with fungi, mites, nematodes, and bacteria enhance beetle survival and development. This review emphasizes the importance of addressing these interactions and the challenges posed by climate change to ensure forest resilience and sustainability.

Keywords: *Bark beetles, Dendroctonus, scolytid beetles, climate change, economic impact, forest ecosystems, wildfires, forest health, pest management, biodiversity, forest fuels, tree defence*

1. Introduction

Forests encompass complex ecosystems that provide a multitude of valuable resources and essential services vital for human well-being and environmental sustainability. These ecosystems are crucial for rural livelihoods, offering timber, fuelwood, fiber, and a range of non-wood forest products. Beyond economic benefits, forests play pivotal roles in combating desertification, safeguarding watersheds, maintaining biodiversity, and sequestering carbon dioxide, thus mitigating climate change impacts. Additionally, they hold significant cultural and social value, providing spaces for recreation, spiritual connection, and cultural practices.

However, forests face numerous threats that jeopardize their health and functionality. Among these threats, insect pests and diseases emerge as formidable challengers, capable of disrupting forest ecosystems on a vast scale. These disturbances can adversely affect tree growth, vitality, and yield, leading to economic losses and impacting wildlife habitats, recreational areas, and aesthetic values. In severe cases, pest outbreaks necessitate drastic management actions such as clearcutting, affecting large swaths of forested landscapes. Among the most influential forest pests are bark beetles (*Dendroctonus* spp., Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Scolytinae), whose impact transcends their small size. These beetles specialize in attacking and breeding within the inner bark (phloem) of trees, particularly targeting stressed, diseased, or injured hosts. The subfamily Scolytinae comprises approximately 6,000 species across 247 genera, previously classified under the family Scolytidae, highlighting their diverse ecological roles from woodborers to herbaceous plant feeders [1].

Geographically widespread, bark beetles thrive in coniferous forests of North America, Europe, and Asia, where they exploit vulnerabilities exacerbated by drought, pollution, overcrowding, or physical damage. Some species specifically target trees like hemlock, spruce, and fir, which are already compromised by various stressors. For example, pine trees defend themselves with sap against bark beetles, yet species like the western pine beetle pose significant threats, as evidenced by the pitch tubes they leave behind on infested ponderosa pines and their complex egg galleries [2].

Climate change intensifies these dynamics, influencing bark beetle outbreaks in unprecedented ways. Notably, the 2013 outbreak affecting forests from Mexico to Alaska underscored the profound impact of changing environmental conditions on forest health and resilience [3]. Understanding the intricate relationship between bark beetle outbreaks and wildfire dynamics becomes crucial under these evolving climatic scenarios.

*Corresponding Author: ***Sagar D and Rajna S***

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Researchers hypothesize two main interactions: first, that fire injuries to trees may increase susceptibility to bark beetle attacks, leading to population surges; and second, that beetle-infested trees might fuel more intense wildfires due to altered forest conditions. Despite extensive research, gaps persist in comprehending how bark beetle outbreaks precisely influence wildfire behaviors. Observations of erratic fire behaviors in beetle-affected forests highlight the urgency for deeper investigations and refined management strategies. The complex interplay between bark beetles, forest health, and fire dynamics necessitates a holistic approach integrating ecological insights, management practices, and policy frameworks to safeguard forest resources and ecosystem services [4].

2. General Life Cycle and Ecology of Bark Beetles

Most bark beetle species emerge from their brood galleries in spring or summer to seek a mate and a new host. Although their effective dispersal flight typically spans only a few hundred meters, some beetles can fly much longer distances, even spanning several kilometers [5]. Dispersal distances vary among species and are influenced by factors such as beetle condition, distribution of susceptible hosts, and environmental conditions. Before colonizing new hosts, beetles may engage in maturation feeding, often within their brood gallery. Some species disperse to specific maturation feeding sites, usually live trees, before seeking a breeding site. This behavior can result in the vectoring of important pathogens [6].

Bark beetle reproductive strategies can be categorized into three types based on when and where mating occurs and which gender initiates gallery construction. Monogamous species involve females initiating attacks and being joined by a single male, with mating usually occurring on the bark or in the gallery. Polygamous species involve males initiating attacks and mating with several females in a nuptial chamber. Solitary species involve mated females attacking weakened but living hosts. Eggs are laid singly or in groups along a narrow gallery, with larvae feeding on phloem tissue in individual niches or galleries radiating from the maternal gallery. Larval development involves several instars, after which they pupate and undergo metamorphosis. Adult beetles emerge from the pupal stage, typically within 5-10 days, and exit through an emergence hole in the bark or maternal gallery [7,8]. The relationship between various bark beetle species and their host trees is summarized in Table 1. The identification characteristics of important bark beetle species are detailed in Table 2.

Symbiotic associations are critical for the success of bark beetles, involving a diverse array of symbionts such as fungi, mites, nematodes, and bacteria [1]. Fungi, particularly Basidiomycetes, play essential roles by metabolizing host substrates into nutrients that support both adult and larval beetles [9,10]. These fungi are crucial in detoxifying tree chemicals and assisting in nutrient acquisition, although their specific roles can vary widely [11,12]. Phoretic mites, found abundantly on bark beetles, contribute to the fungal diversity in beetle galleries and vary in their ecological roles from predatory to mycophagous [13,14,15]. Nematodes associated with bark beetles include parasitic and phoretic species, influencing beetle fitness and possibly affecting tree health [16]. Bacteria associated with bark beetles, such as actinomycetes, produce antibiotic compounds that may aid in overcoming host defenses. These symbionts enhance beetle survival and development by facilitating nutrient acquisition, detoxification of host chemicals, and protection against antagonistic organisms, thereby contributing significantly to the ecological success of bark beetles.

Regarding ecology, bark beetles reproduce in the inner bark of trees, with many species attacking and killing live trees, while others live in dead or weakened hosts. In undisturbed forests, they aid in recycling dead wood and renewing the forest, but aggressive species can invade and kill healthy trees, with most stages spent beneath the bark. Female beetles initiate attacks, releasing pheromones to attract males and initiate mass attacks that overcome the tree's defenses [17].

3. Reasons behind the Rapid Breeding of Bark Beetles

Bark beetles, integral to forest ecosystems for millions of years, periodically undergo outbreaks that play a crucial role in forest regeneration. They typically target damaged or stressed trees, facilitating the survival of healthier specimens in a natural process akin to the survival of the fittest. However, recent outbreaks have been unusually severe, with beetle populations surging to unprecedented levels. This surge is primarily attributed to significant changes in forest ecology and temperature patterns [18]. Bark beetle outbreaks often coincide with periods of environmental stress, such as droughts and unseasonably warm temperatures. These conditions weaken tree defenses, making them more vulnerable to beetle attacks. As beetles infest trees, they disrupt the natural shedding of needles, causing them to accumulate on forest floors. This buildup of dry needles significantly increases surface fuel loads, elevating the risk and intensity of wildfires, particularly in the western United States [19]. The three essential components for any fire to ignite are fuel, oxygen, and a heat source, which is being illustrated in the forest fire triangle (Fig. 1).

Moreover, the chemical composition of infested trees changes due to beetle activity. Defensive resins and other substances, including terpenoids, accumulate in forest litter, enhancing its flammability. This alteration in fuel chemistry exacerbates fire risks, particularly by facilitating the spread of crown fires under favorable weather conditions. Abiotic factors, such as drought and high temperatures, further exacerbate these impacts by creating conducive environments for beetle proliferation and increasing forest susceptibility to fires (Fig. 2). Lightning strikes during dry conditions can easily ignite fires, further compounded by gaseous pollutants emitted during combustion, which impede tree growth and contribute to overall forest mortality by increasing beetle breeding [20].

4. Effects of climate change on bark beetle physiology and distribution

Climate change profoundly influences bark beetles, affecting their physiology and distribution both directly and indirectly. Direct effects include shifts in developmental timing and cold tolerance. For example, rising summer temperatures can lead to facultative prepupal diapause in spruce beetles, accelerating life cycles to complete within a year [21]. Beetles like spruce and mountain pine adapt by accumulating cryoprotectants such as glycerol, which enhances cold tolerance as temperatures drop in autumn.

Indirectly, climate change affects bark beetle success through its impacts on community associates and host tree abundance. Seasonal temperatures determine the fungal species vectored by dispersing beetles, which in turn influences beetle population dynamics [22]. Decreasing niche availability for tree survival due to climate-induced stresses, including biotic and abiotic pressures, further exacerbates beetle impacts [23,24].

Anthropogenic factors such as invasive species, urbanization, and habitat destruction contribute to biotic homogenization, which reduces forest ecosystem resilience and services [25].
In western North America, the synergistic effects of climate change, bark beetles, and wildfires are particularly pronounced. Increased temperatures and vapour pressure deficits escalate fuel aridity, expanding wildfire-prone areas. This intensifies interactions between wildfires and bark beetles, where beetle outbreaks alter forest fuels, thereby exacerbating fire frequency and intensity [26]. The mountain pine beetle, a focal species, exemplifies these dynamics by modifying fuel chemistry and structure, influencing wildfire behaviour.
Understanding these complex interactions is crucial for effective forest management and wildfire prediction. Integrating semi-empirical models to simulate the impacts of beetle outbreaks and fuel reduction treatments on fire behaviour can help mitigate fire risks and enhance firefighter safety. Addressing these intertwined challenges requires proactive strategies that consider both ecological and climatic variables to sustainably manage forests in the face of ongoing environmental changes.
The operational fire behavior models were utilised to predict fire dynamics in areas impacted by mountain pine beetle (MPB) outbreaks [26] (Fig. 3). Custom fuel models [27] specifically addressed lodgepole pine fuels affected by MPBs, highlighting discrepancies in predicting surface fire behavior across varying conditions. Additional models, such as Rothermel's semi-empirical surface fire spread model, NEXUS [28], and BEHAVE PLUS [29], were employed to evaluate both surface and crown fire behavior.
The interaction between bark beetle outbreaks and wildfires in western North American forests has intensified, reshaping forest structure and composition. Mountain pine beetle epidemics alter fuel characteristics, influencing wildfire frequency and intensity. Conversely, wildfires can exacerbate bark beetle impacts by modifying fuel moisture, chemistry, and structure. Understanding these interactions is crucial for effective forest management, focusing on how fuel reduction treatments and wildfire severity influence mountain pine beetle dynamics and vice versa. This research underscores the importance of integrating ecological insights into wildfire prediction and management strategies in the United States.

5. Tree defense mechanism under beetle attack

Trees are compelled to defend themselves against threats such as bark beetles, employing both physical and chemical strategies to combat these pests. Understanding these defense mechanisms reveals why trees have developed a variety of protective responses. Coniferous trees, in particular, have evolved diverse defense mechanisms, including constitutive mechanical and chemical defenses, which can be up-regulated in response to attack [30].
The defense strategies of trees encompass a range of responses, from repelling invaders to defending, killing, or compartmentalizing the damage. Conifers have developed bark defense mechanisms that utilize toxic and polymer chemistry, anatomical structures, and inducible defenses. When beetles invade, pine trees initially appear powerless as the beetles burrow in. However, beneath the bark, a chemical defense mechanism is at work. The tree exudes resin, which acts as a deterrent to the beetles. As the beetle digs, it encounters the resin and struggles to move in and out of the burrow, trapping air under its wings to breathe even under unfavorable conditions. If the tree is healthy, it may produce enough resin to encase and immobilize the beetle as the resin solidifies [31].
During periods of drought, however, trees are unable to produce sufficient resin. In such cases, beetles release pheromones to attract other members of their species. The phloem, a critical layer of tissue responsible for nutrient transport throughout the tree, becomes damaged by the beetles. This tissue damage creates meandering tunnels, and beetles that consume the phloem are often referred to as "drunken beetles" due to their erratic feeding behaviour. In severe drought conditions, the disruption of nutrient flow can lead to the death of millions of trees. Beetles also lay eggs inside these tunnels, and once the larvae hatch, they continue to grow within the bark. Although bark has limited nutritional value, western pine beetle larvae benefit from a fungal symbiont. This fungus, which forms a white, fluffy mass around the larvae, is introduced into the tree by the mother beetle and serves as a constant food source. As the larvae mature, they eventually emerge from the tree in large numbers, seeking new pine trees to infest and perpetuate the cycle [32].

6. Characteristics of Forest fuels and their role in fire behavior

Wildland fire behavior encompasses the ignition, development of flames, and spread of fires, influenced by interactions among fuels, weather conditions, and topography. Key topographic features such as aspect, elevation, slope, and overall configuration significantly impact fire intensity, direction, and spread. While these features are stable over geological time, they interact with weather variables like air temperature, relative humidity, and wind speed, which vary over different time scales [33].
Forest fuels consist of various plant materials from trees, including bark, cones, needles, leaves, twigs, branches, stems, boles, downed logs, and understory vegetation such as grasses and shrubs. These fuels are categorized into ground fuels (F-layer and H-layer), surface fuels (L-layer and woody debris), ladder fuels (immature trees and shrubs), and aerial fuels (crown material). The arrangement and characteristics of these fuel types—including quantity, size, compactness, chemistry, and distribution—form the fuel complex [26].
In lodgepole pine forests, fuel conditions vary significantly depending on successional status and disturbance history [34]. Understanding these fuel dynamics is crucial for predicting and managing wildfire behavior, as they directly influence fire intensity, spread patterns, and the potential for crown fires. Effective management strategies must consider these fuel characteristics to mitigate fire risk and enhance forest resilience against increasing wildfire threats in a changing climate.

7. Economic importance of bark Beetles in the context of forest fires

Bark beetles have profound economic implications, particularly in the context of forest fires. Their interaction with forest ecosystems is exacerbated by factors like climate change and forest management practices, significantly influencing the economic landscape in several key areas:

7.1. Impact on Timber Resources and Forest Products Industry

Bark beetle infestations have led to the destruction of more than 16 million hectares (40 million acres) of lodgepole pine forests in the USA alone. In British Columbia, Canada, beetles destroyed 5 million hectares (12 million acres) of forest [3].

The accumulation of standing dead trees (snags) weakened by beetle activity serves as highly flammable fuel during wildfires [27]. This not only reduces timber yield and quality but also necessitates costly salvage logging operations following wildfires to recover usable timber. The economic feasibility of such operations is influenced by the extent of beetle damage and subsequent fire severity.

7.2. Forest Fire Suppression and Rehabilitation Costs

Wildfires in bark beetle-infested forests require extensive firefighting efforts, involving substantial costs for personnel, equipment, aerial resources, and fire retardants [27]. For instance, in Colorado, 264,000 acres (107,000 hectares) of trees were affected, necessitating significant expenditures on firefighting and rehabilitation efforts [3]. Post-fire rehabilitation, including reforestation, erosion control, and habitat restoration, demands additional financial investments from government agencies and stakeholders. These costs escalate with the severity and extent of wildfires, further straining local and regional budgets.

7.3. Disruption of Forest-Based Economies

The economic disruption caused by bark beetle infestations and subsequent wildfires extends beyond immediate firefighting and rehabilitation costs. Loss of forest productivity, habitat degradation, and changes in ecosystem services impact local communities reliant on forest-based economies [3]. Reduced property values, diminished ecosystem services like water filtration and carbon sequestration, and decreased attractiveness for investment and development contribute to long-term economic downturns in affected regions.

7.4. Impact on Recreation and Tourism

Forest fires resulting from bark beetle outbreaks deter tourists and outdoor enthusiasts, affecting local economies dependent on recreation and tourism [27]. Smoke and fire-related closures restrict access to national parks, forests, and recreational areas, leading to revenue losses for businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and recreational outfitters.

8. Management strategies

Scolytid beetles, which play a significant economic role worldwide, particularly in temperate forests, pose a challenge to maintaining their populations below levels that could cause damage. The choice of control strategy depends on factors such as (i) the beetle's habits, (ii) the thickness of the bark, (iii) the size of the infested trees, (iv) the height of the infestation, (v) the types of forests, (vi) the accessibility of roads, and (vii) public pressure. The following are common control measures [35]

a) Salvage: Infected trees are removed from the forest before the brood matures. While this method helps in reducing infestation, it can be costly and may not always be feasible [36].

b) Fell, Deck, and Burn: This method is used for small, infected trees. Trees are cut down at right angles to minimize damage to healthy trees, which would otherwise become vulnerable to further beetle attacks.

c) Oil Burning: This technique involves applying slow-burning fuel oil to the thin, infected bark on standing trees and then igniting it. Care must be taken to protect other trees from fire damage.

d) Peeling: This method is effective when the brood is visible on the bark. The bark is removed from standing or felled logs to expose the brood to the elements or predators.

e) Solar Heat: Infected trees are cut down, branches are removed, and logs are exposed to strong sunlight. Temperatures between 24 and 26°C can kill bark beetles. Logs should be periodically turned to maximize exposure to the sun [37].

f) Chemical Control: Chemicals such as benzene hexachloride, ethylene dibromide, and ortho dichlorobenzene are used to control beetles. These chemicals are applied in varying concentrations to logs or trees. Although effective and relatively inexpensive, chemical control can harm wildlife and disrupt forest ecology through biological accumulation [38].

g) Pheromone Traps: Sex-attractant pheromone traps are used with varying success to control certain beetles. While many attempts to control bark beetles using pheromones, either alone or in combination with tree resins or alcohol, have been made, results have often been inconclusive.

h) Indirect Control: Natural factors, both biotic and abiotic, regulate insect populations. Bark and ambrosia beetles' populations fluctuate annually and seasonally, influenced by temperature, rainfall, humidity, host health, and natural disasters. Biotic factors such as nematode parasites, diseases, predatory mites, insectivorous animals, parasitoids, and insect parasites play a crucial role in population control [39]. Supporting these natural enemies can significantly reduce beetle populations, sometimes eliminating up to 90% of the breeding population in a single generation.

I) Insect Parasites: The majority of insect parasites belong to the order Hymenoptera, including families such as Braconidae, Bethylidae, Chalcididae, Encyrtidae, Eupelidae, Ichneumonidae, Proctotrupidae, and Torymidae. Notable examples include *Platysma rimarium*, *Thanasimus himalayensis*, *Niponius canaliculus*, and *Corticeus flavipennis*. Insect predators also include coleopterous families like Cleridae, Colydiidae, Cucujidae, Elateridae, Histeridae, Nitidulidae, Rhizophagidae, and Staphylinidae. Both larval and adult beetles are preyed upon by these insects.

j) Insectivorous Vertebrates: Vertebrates such as amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals are significant predators of bark beetles. In Assam Forest, bird species have been observed preying on beetles around freshly felled logs. Lizards and rodents are also known to feed on these beetles.

10. Conclusion

In conclusion, bark beetles demonstrate remarkable adaptability and complexity in their life histories, interactions with host plants, and ecological roles within forest ecosystems. Their ability to exploit various ecological niches is facilitated by sophisticated chemical signaling and symbiotic associations, which collectively underscore their success as significant forest pests. Bark beetles pose substantial challenges to forest management due to their diverse reproductive strategies, which include opportunistic infestations of stressed trees as well as persistent attacks on otherwise healthy stands. The impact of bark beetles on forest ecosystems is multifaceted, with consequences extending beyond tree mortality to affect forest structure, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.

The ongoing and intensified effects of climate change further exacerbate these challenges by altering forest composition, increasing tree stress, and modifying beetle physiology and behavior. Concurrently, human activities, including global transportation and land use practices, contribute to the spread and impact of bark beetles, facilitating their invasion into new areas and intensifying their effects on existing forested landscapes. Addressing these issues requires a nuanced understanding of bark beetle dynamics within the context of changing environmental conditions. Effective management strategies must integrate ecological principles with adaptive forest practices to enhance resilience against bark beetle outbreaks. This includes developing and implementing strategies that account for the interactions between bark beetles, forest health, and wildfire dynamics. By embracing a holistic approach that combines scientific research, monitoring, and adaptive management, we can better safeguard forest resources and ecosystem services against the growing threat posed by bark beetles and the broader impacts of climate change.

11. Future scope of the study

Future research should aim to deepen our understanding of bark beetle population dynamics, focusing on the roles of microbial symbionts and chemical ecology in beetle-environment interactions. Exploring how symbiotic fungi, mites, nematodes, and bacteria influence beetle behavior and survival will provide insights into their ecological functions and impacts on forest ecosystems. Additionally, studying the chemical defenses of trees against bark beetles can reveal potential vulnerabilities and improve our understanding of these interactions. Developing advanced early detection systems and predictive models is crucial for timely intervention and mitigating the economic and ecological impacts of bark beetle outbreaks. Utilizing technologies like remote sensing, machine learning, and artificial intelligence can enhance real-time monitoring and forecasting of beetle infestations, enabling targeted management strategies and reducing reliance on severe measures such as clearcutting.

Moreover, increasing public awareness and stakeholder engagement in forest management practices will support sustainable solutions to mitigate bark beetle impacts and boost forest resilience. Educating communities, landowners, and policymakers about forest health and beetle dynamics will foster collaborative efforts in managing forest resources effectively. Initiatives such as community monitoring programs and public outreach campaigns can facilitate proactive and preventative measures. Addressing the challenges posed by bark beetles requires a holistic approach that integrates ecological research, adaptive management, and collaborative efforts across local, regional, and global levels. Prioritizing forest health and resilience amidst growing environmental pressures will help safeguard our forests for future generations.

Conflict of interest

All the authors have thoroughly reviewed the review article and have no conflict of interest in submitting the article to the "Agriculture Association of Textile Chemical and Critical Reviews Journal".

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Figure 1. Forest fire triangle- Three components—fuel, oxygen, and a heat source—are essential for any fire to ignite.

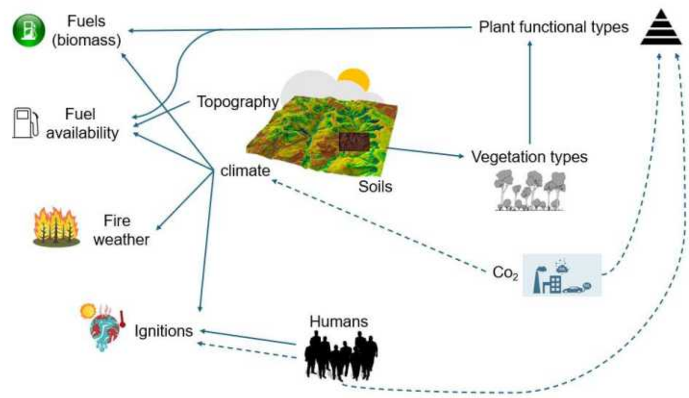


Figure 2. Influence of abiotic and biotic factors (climate, soils, vegetation types, plant functional types) on fire regimes via four "switches" (fuels, fuel availability, fire weather, and ignitions).

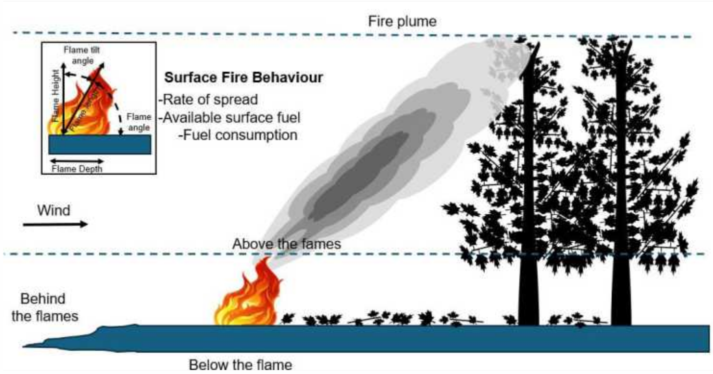
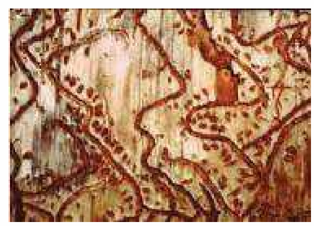


Figure 3. Changes to surface fuel load affected by mountain pine beetle activity and their influence on surface fire behavior and the potential transition to crown fire

Table 1: Bark beetles and their host trees (40)

Common name	Scientific names	Major host trees
Arizona Five spined Ips	*Ips lecontei*	*Pinus ponderosa, and others*
Pine Engraver	*Ips pini*	*P. contorta, P. jeffreyi, P. ponderosa*
Round headed Pine Beetle	*Ips coriifusus*	*Pinus arizonica, Pinus engelmannii, R. flexilis, Pinus leiophylla, P. ponderosa*
Southern Pine Beetle	*Dendroctonus adjunctus*	*Pinus strobiformis*
Western Balsam Bark Beetle	*Dryocoetes confusus*	*Abies lasiocarpa, and others*
Spruce Beetle	*Dendroctonus frontalis*	*Picea engelmannii, P. glauca, P. sitchensis*
Eastern Larch Beetle	*Dendroctonus simplex*	*Larix laricina*
Northern Spruce Engraver	*Ips perturbatus*	*Picea engelmannii, Picea glauca, Picea Jutzii, Picea mariana, Picea sitchensis*
Pine Engraver	*Ips pini*	*P. contorta, P. jeffreyi, P. ponderosa, and others*
Douglas-fir Beetle	*Dendroctonus pseudotsugae*	*Pseudotsuga menziesii*
Eastern Larch Beetle	*Dendroctonus simplex*	*Larix laricina*
Jeffrey Pine Beetle	*Scolytus ventralis*	*Abies concolor, Abies grandis, Abies magnifica*
Fir Engraver	*Dendroctonus jeffreyi*	*P. jeffreyi*
Piñon Ips	*Ips confusus*	*Pinus edulis, Pinus monophylla*
Northern Spruce Engraver	*Ips perturbatus*	*Picea engelmannii, Picea glauca, Picea Jutzii, Picea mariana, Picea sitchensis*
Douglas-fir Beetle	*Dendroctonus pseudotsugae*	*Pseudotsuga menziesii*
California Five spined Ips	*Ips paraconfusus*	*Pinus attenuata, Pinus contorta, Pinus coulteri, Pinus jeffreyi, Pinus lambertiana, P. ponderosa, Pinus radiata, Pinus torreyana*

Table 2: Identification characters of important species of bark beetles

Common Name	Beetle Species	Identification	Hosts	Major Identifying Features
	*Dendroctonus frontalis* (Southern Pine Beetle)	Adult: 3 mm, dark reddish-brown to black color, notched. front head, rounded hind end; Larvae: crescent-shaped, whitish with amber head; Newly emerged adults: soft-bodied, amber-colored.	Various pine species	 S-shaped egg galleries, pitch tubes on tree trunks
	*Dendroctonus ponderosae* (Mountain Pine Beetle)	Adult: 4-7.5 mm, small, black, cylindrical; Larvae: legless, creamy-white with light brown heads; Eggs: smooth, oval, white, translucent.	Lodgepo le pine, various pine species	 Pitch tubes, boring dust, yellowing foliage
	*Dendroctonus valens* (RedTurpentine Beetle)	Adult: 6-10 mm, dark brown to black with reddish-brown wing covers; Larvae: grublike, legless, white with brown head; Eggs: shiny, opaque white, oval cylindrical.	Various pine, spruce, larch, fir, Douglas-fir	 Large pitch tubes on infected tree trunks

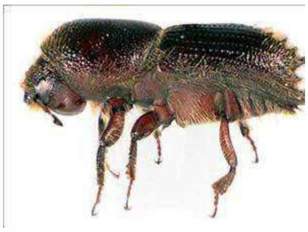
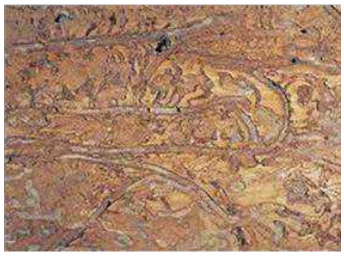
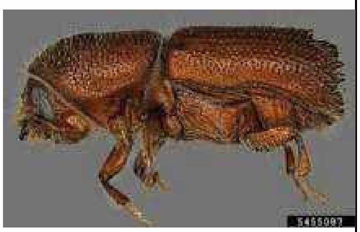
	*Ips sexdentatus* (Six-Spined Engraver Beetle) *Ips*	Adult: 5.5-8.2 mm, robust, shiny, brown or black body with erect yellow hairs, six spines on each side of forewings. Adult: 4.5-6.0	Pines, firs, larches, spruces, Douglas- fir Various	 Needles to turn yellow and reddish-brown and is a vector for blue-stain fungi
	*subelongatus* (Larch Bark Beetle)	mm, brown elongated body with spines on forewings.	larch species, firs, spruces, pines	 Elongated body, spines on forewings
	*Ips typographus* (European Spruce Bark Beetle)	Adult: 4.2-5.5 mm, cylindrical, reddish to dark brown or black, distinct yellowish hairs, four spines on each side of forewings.	Spruces, pines, firs	 Reddish to dark brown color, yellowish hairs, four spines on each side of forewings
	*Orthotomicus erosus* (Mediterranean Pine Engraver)	Adult: 2.7-3.8 mm, reddish- brown, thoracic shield covering head, four lateral spines on forewings.	Primarily pines, other conifers like Pseudots uga menziesi i, Picea, Abies, Cedrus	 Reddish-brown thoracic shield, lateral spines forewings color, four on

Image source: Google

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