

EMERALD ASH BORER

✎ DOES IT BORE OR IS IT A BORE? ✎



All native North American ash tree species and cultivars are susceptible to infestation by the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis* Fairmaire). The larvae of this beetle bore into and feed on the inner bark, or phloem, and the outer sapwood where nutrients and water are transported through the tree.



When seen under the ash tree's bark, the larva's serpentine feeding pattern leaves an S-shaped design. This passage created by beetle larva in the wood is called a gallery. When the larva consume enough of the inner tree, the ash tree will start to decline and eventually die.



The emerald ash borer's life cycle depends upon its ability to bore, meaning to make a hole, into the ash tree to feed. The word bore is a homonym, a word that has the same spelling and pronunciation, but has different meanings. Sometimes the meaning of a word can be affected by the part of speech, whether the word is used as a noun, adjective or a verb. The word bore also means:

- the interior diameter of a gun barrel
- a tidal flood with a high abrupt front
- a dull or tiresome person
- something that is devoid of interest
- to cause to feel weariness and restlessness through lack of interest

So while the emerald ash borer may bore, it is never boring!

Homonyms

Let's take a look at some other words that have multiple meanings. There are two meanings listed for each word. Can you draw a line to match the meanings to the words?

BAT

- any of various swimming birds
- to move quickly and lower one's head

BILL

- a winged insect
- to move in or pass through the air with wings

DUCK

- to combine resources
- an implement with a handle and a solid surface used for hitting the ball in games

FLY

- the solid mineral material forming part of the surface of the earth
- to sway back and forth

FOOT

- a mainly nocturnal mammal
- an amount of money owed for goods supplied in a written statement of charges

GALLERY

- the difference between the largest and smallest numbers
- an external anatomical structure found mostly in birds

LEFT

- lands on which the indigenous vegetation is predominately grasses
- correct as a fact

POUND

- a unit of measurement equal to 12 inches
- being the opposite side of the body in which the heart is mostly located

POOL

- each of the small, bony plates protecting the skin of fish and reptiles
- a device to measure weight

ROCK

- a small area of still water
- the terminal part of the leg upon which an individual stands

RANGE

- a room or building devoted to the exhibition of works of art
- not used up

RIGHT

- a unit of weight in general use equal to 16 oz.
- being the side of the body in which the heart is mostly located

SCALE

- a passage created by beetle larva in wood
- to strike heavily

What other homonyms can you think of?

- any of various swimming birds
- to move quickly and lower one's head
- a winged insect
- to move in or pass through the air with wings
- to combine resources
- an implement with a handle and a solid surface used for hitting the ball in games
- the solid mineral material forming part of the surface of the earth
- to sway back and forth
- a mainly nocturnal mammal
- an amount of money owed for goods supplied in a written statement of charges
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