



SOUTH AMERICAN PALM WEEVIL

COMMON PALM PROBLEMS & PEST IDENTIFICATION



The progression of palm tree decline once infested with SAPW

INTRODUCTION

There are many pests and diseases plaguing palm trees in Southern California. The key to proper management and mitigation starts with correctly identifying what problem your palm tree might be having. South American palm weevil (SAPW) is one huge threat to native and non-native palms alike. Due to its large size and fast reproduction, it is important to correctly identify if SAPW is the cause of your palm tree decline.

IDENTIFYING FACTORS OF SAPW

These are the signs to look for when trying to determine if South American palm weevil is causing your tree decline.

- ▶ Accumulated frass (insect excrement) at leaf bases.
- ▶ Pupal cases on the ground near the tree.
- ▶ Holes and tunneling at the base of palm fronds.
- ▶ Characteristic putrid odor.
- ▶ Progressive foliage yellowing and eventual death.
- ▶ Begins in the topmost newest leaves and progressively goes down into the crown.



Pupal Cases



Tunneling Holes



Rotting Putrid Odor



Frass



OTHER PROBLEMS

Although South American Palm Weevil is a huge threat and could potentially be the reason for palm tree decline, there are other pests and diseases that can cause significant damage or even death to a palm tree.

FUSARIUM WILT (*Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. canariensis*):

- ▶ Fungal infection that damages lower leaves that die from the bottom up
- ▶ Characteristically showing symptoms in only half of the palm tree.



RED PALM WEEVIL

(*Rhynchophorus ferrugineus* and *R. vulneratus*):

- ▶ Attacks Canary Island date palms.
- ▶ Can be identified by red stripes on adults.
- ▶ Eradicated from California (2015).



DIAMOND SCALE

(*Phaeochoropsis neowashingtoniae*):

- ▶ A fungal infection that causes dark, water-soaked spots that expand from pinprick size to shiny black diamond-shaped fruiting bodies on leaves and stems.
- ▶ Large amounts of spores can cause tree decline from the bottom up.



GIANT PALM BORER

(*Dinapate wrightii*):

- ▶ This beetle tunnels into palm wood, leaving large holes about ½ inch in diameter.
- ▶ Adults have rounded heads with no "weevil snout."
- ▶ A secondary pest, attacking already weakened plants.



OTHER PESTS

- ▶ Rats, agave snout weevil, armored scale insects, aphids, mealybugs, mites, moths and caterpillars.
- ▶ Distinguish between SAPW and other insects by the presence of pupal cases and galleries, topmost crown leaves die first (other insect pests damage leaves without causing full-scale dieback).

Adult Female
SAPW

VS.

Agave Snout
Weevil



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