

Deathwatch beetle - *Xestobium rufovillosum*



Identification:

Looks something like large Furniture beetle damage. Round holes about 3mm diameter, often very extensive tunnelling. Lots of frass usually present so shake timber -- frass is 'bun' shaped, readily visible to the naked eye.

Attacked wood is virtually always hardwood with some degree of decay, often by the white rot, *Donkioporia expansa*. Wood is usually oak. However, Deathwatch beetle will attack softwood IF well rotted and in contact with infested hardwood (see lower photo).

Tip: Think of the attack as 'large furniture beetle' and then look for the frass -- the 'buns' are readily visible and the frass feels very gritty. Shake sample to get frass out.

Watch out for attack in softwood samples - check for large 'bun-shaped pellets'!

Deathwatch beetle is not usually found in Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Treatment usually required.

House Longhorn beetle - *Hylotrupes bajulus*:



Identification:

Attacks the sapwood of softwood. Large truly OVAL holes (NOT round holes cut at an angle), and LOTS of frass with readily visible 'sausage' shaped pellets (tap samples to remove frass).

Severe internal damage with lots of frass; tunnels truly oval and tend to coalesce. The surface of wood often remains as a thin sound 'veneer' in a severe attack. Dig into the sample; *lots* of damage beneath surface.

Note: The insect is basically restricted to the SE of England. NEEDS TREATMENT IF ACTIVE.

Cellar fungus - *Coniophora puteana* (a brown rot)



Strands

Mycelium growing over masonry



Identification:

If no mycelium present then it can be difficult to identify from other brown rots. However, in most cases the rot is 'internal', and leaves a very thin 'skin' of sound wood at the surface (see photograph). This can be used to suggest the damage *might* be 'cellar' fungus.

Mycelium is dark brown to black, often in sheets; can grow over the surface of very damp masonry under very humid conditions.

Frequently, fine brown strands emanate from rotting wood; these are quite delicate and do not go brittle on drying.

(*Coniophora marmorata* looks very similar to *C. puteana*)

Mine fungus - *Fibroporia vaillantii* (a brown rot)



Identification:

Very difficult to identify without any fungal growth, so if you see it without growth just describe it as a 'brown' rot.

All growth if present is effectively PURE WHITE! Mycelium - white, fernlike; can look like 'frost' on a window (see photo).

Strands - white, tough and remain FLEXIBLE when dry.

Fruiting body - white, fleshy with a small 'honeycomb' appearance of surface.