

South American Palm Weevil

TREE DOCTOR TIPS

South American Palm Weevil (*Rhynchophorus palmarum*)

DESCRIPTION:

South American palm weevil is a large beetle that was first observed in south San Diego County in 2016. These beetles lay eggs in the growing point of the palm and when they hatch the large larvae feed on the growing point tissue (heart of palm). This feeding activity eventually kills the palm. The beetles have been reported from Point Loma to San Marcos and east to El Cajon.

HOSTS:

The beetles seem to favor Canary Island date palms, but also infest blue hesper palm (aka blue Mexican fan palm). There is growing concern that the beetle may also attack or kill California fan palm.

BIOLOGY AND SYMPTOMS:

Some common signs indicating a palm is infested with the weevil in your neighborhood are:

- Flattening of the crown
- Yellowing of the foliage
- Pupal cases on the ground near the palm
- Holes, tunnels and/or an accumulation of frass at the base of fronds

MANAGEMENT:

Unfortunately, it is typically too late to save a palm once it is infested with the weevil. Systemic insecticides prior to weevil attack can offer palms protection, so we recommend their use on Canary Island date palm and blue hesper palms in San Diego County. There is some concern that the beetle may also attack and kill California fan palm, so it may be advisable to treat them as well. For more information about this destructive pest, contact your local arborist.

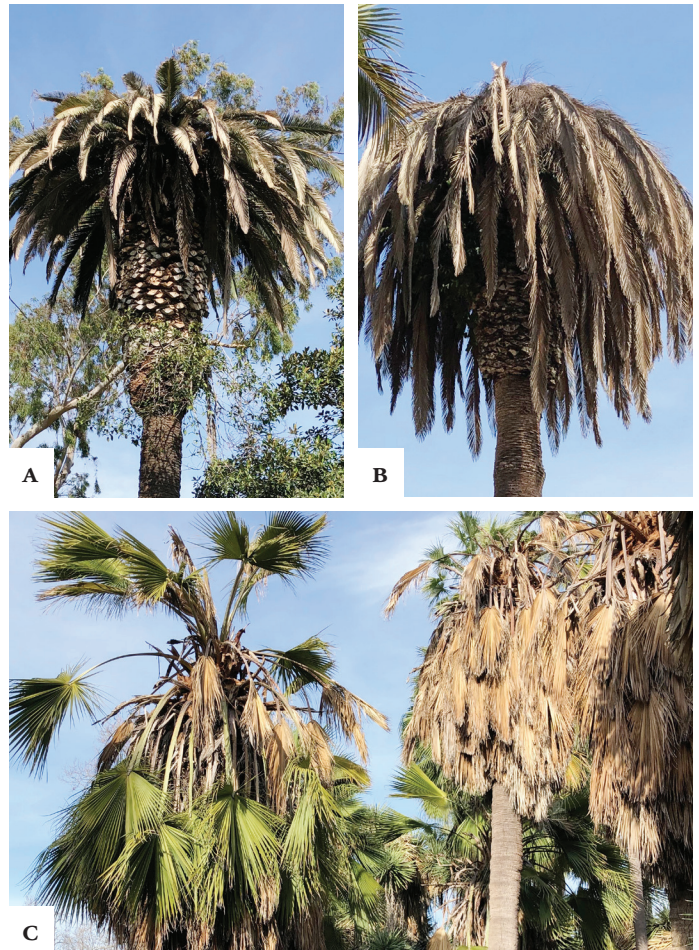


FIGURE A. INFESTED CANARY ISLAND DATE PALM

FIGURE B. CANARY ISLAND DATE PALM KILLED BY SOUTH AMERICAN PALM WEEVIL

FIGURE C. INFESTED BLUE HESPER PALM

*The scientists at **The Davey Institute** laboratory and research facility support our arborists and technicians in diagnosing and prescribing based on the latest arboricultural science. For specific treatment and application details, your arborist may consult *The Davey Institute's Plant Health Care Book*.*

