

BARKLICE

ORDER : PSOCOPTERA (*psochos*=rubbed small, *pteryx*=wing, refers to mouthparts used to hold head still as jaws scrape food from substrate)

IMPORTANCE Important scavengers. Recycle nutrients from microflora to other food chain members. Some predators. No pests. Abundant on conifers in British Columbia, but rarely observed due to minute size, camouflage colour, and hiding habits.

DISTRIBUTION Worldwide: 3200 spp. North America: 287 spp. Canada: 72 spp.
(36)

BIOLOGY Females lay up to 57 eggs (some give birth to nymphs), singly or in groups, glued in bark cracks or crevices, or on foliage. Life cycle (6 instars) : 8-10 weeks. Gregarious nymphs, may aggregate under light webbing. Paurometabolous development (gradual metamorphosis: terrestrial nymphs resemble wingless adults).

FOOD SOURCE Mainly scavengers or herbivores feeding on dry organic matter such as dry plant material (e.g. bark), lichen, algae, fungi, moss, dead insect parts, and sooty mold growing on aphid honeydew. Some occasionally feed on invertebrate eggs.

SEASONAL OCCURRENCE :

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

MONITORING

Methods - Berlese funnel (filled with dry branches), branch beatings, habitat inspection with hand lens, sweep net. Handle with aspirator or fine paintbrush.

Habitats - On or under bark of living and dead conifer trees and shrubs, in bird nests, on lichen and algae, on and under rocks, on fences. Some in silken webs on tree branches.

CONSERVATION

Pesticide Use - Use pesticides only as a last resort.

RECOMMENDED READINGS : 11, 88

BARKLICE

DESCRIPTION

Adults 1-10 mm. Small to minute, soft-bodied, resemble aphids or psyllids in shape and size. Long brown antennae, chewing mouthparts, large round mobile head with protruding compound eyes. Some with 2 clear pairs of wings, held roof-like at rest, others without wings (Fig. 114). Order name refers to rod-shaped mouthparts used to hold head against substrate as jaws scrape at lichen, mold or algae. Fast runners, some jump, do not fly readily. Common seed orchard species are beige, brown, black, and yellow, some with dark markings.

Eggs May be covered with silk or debris (Fig. 115).

Immatures Nymphs resemble small adults without wings (Fig. 116).



Figure 114 - Barklice.



Figure 115 - Barklouse eggs.



Figure 116 - Barklouse adult and nymph.