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Pacific Forest Research Centre • 506 West Burnside Rd. • Victoria , B.C. • V8Z 1M5 March 5, 1975.

BLACK VINE WEEVILS

KILL DOUGLAS-FIR SEEDLINGS

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PACIFIC FOREST RESEARCH CENTRE 506 WEST BURNSIDE ROAD

Larvae of the black vine weevil, Brachyrhinus sulcatus, killed 500 one-year-old Douglas-fir seedlings in early 1975 at the Pacific Forest Research Centre, Victoria, B. C.

In November 1973, 1,200 seedlings were planted in 15 cedar boxes containing forest soil from the Cowichan Lake area, and maintained under greenhouse conditions to study clonal susceptibility to Poria weirii root rot.

Seedling mortality was first noticed in January 1975 and continued until mid-February. Weevil larvae had eaten the stem bark just below the soil level, completely girdling seedlings and damaging others by root feeding. Of the 15 planted boxes, 100% mortality occurred in 3; 90-95% mortality in 2; 30-50% in 2; 5-10% in 4, and 1-5% in 4.

Controlled environmental conditions in the greenhouse presumably induced early activity of both larvae and adults, which normally overwinter in the soil and duff. The adults normally feed on foliage, but in this instance no such damage occurred.

"Dylox", "Furadan", and "Chlordane" were applied in late February to control the outbreak.

The only previous outbreak at the Pacific Forest Research Centre occurred in 1972 when black vine weevil larvae killed 450 western hemlock container seedlings, grown under outdoor conditions.