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INVASIVE INSECT SPECIES INTRODUCED IN TURKEY IN RECENT YEARS

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Abstract

An invasive species is a plant, fungus, or animal species that is not native to a specific location but come from outside the region in different ways, and that has a tendency to spread to a degree believed to cause damage to the environment, human economy or human health. Invasive species adversely economically, environmentally, or ecologically affect the habitats and bioregions. If many exotic plants and animals succeed to settle in a new ecosystem that they are not naturally found, they become invasive species. Many organisms pass from one ecosystem to another due to the development of trade and transportation routes. The increase in importing of the plants and wood material in the recent years has been causing the presence of these invasive species in Turkey. The ways where these pests are introduced vary broadly, but they are often the consequence of accidental or deliberate human activities. Whatever their means of arrival, invasive species can have an adverse and often very damaging impact on agriculture, forestry, the natural environment and human lifestyle. Although some impacts such as the loss of economic values can be clearly quantified, the others including environmental impacts (e.g. loss or change of biodiversity), impingements on human lifestyle, and amenity losses are not easy to quantify. Turkey is like a bridge between Europe and Asia in international trade, so the risk of transmission of invasive species is very high. In recent years, many invasive insect species had entered into Turkey in various ways and these pests have caused great damage on many forest trees and ornamental plants. If we order these entries chronologically; it will be as follows: In 1960s *Dendroctonus micans* (Great spruce bark beetle) on *Picea* (spruce) trees, in 2005 *Rhynchophorus ferrugineus* (Red palm weevil) on Phoenix and palm (palm) trees, in 2009 *Corythucha ciliata* (Sycamore lace bug) on *Platanus* (oriental plane) trees, in 2009 *Leptoglossus occidentalis* (Western conifer seed bug) on *Pinus* (pine) trees and mainly on *Pinus pinea* (stone pine), in 2012 *Cydalima perspectalis* (Box tree moth) on *Buxus* (boxwood) trees, in 2014 *Anoplophora chinensis* (Citrus longhorned beetle) on *Acer* (maple) trees and in 2014 *Dryocosmus kuriphilus* (Chestnut gall wasp) on *Castanea* (chestnut) trees.

Keywords: *Invasive species, damage, Turkey.*