# European Larch Canker in Maine

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## ABSTRACT

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European larch canker, caused by *Lachnellula willkommii*, was found in 1981 in Washington County, ME, infecting eastern larch (*Larix laricina*) stands. In most locations, only branch cankers were observed. In two stands, numerous stem cankers were found and a few trees had died. The age of the oldest cankers indicates the disease had been in the area for at least 11 yr.

European larch canker, caused by Lachnellula willkommii (Hartig) Dennis, was found on eastern larch (Larix laricina (Du Roi) K. Koch) in 11 locations along the Atlantic Coast in Washington County, ME (Fig. 1). The survey was conducted in 1981 and early 1982, prompted by reports of the disease on eastern larch in southern New Brunswick, Canada (2). Only natural stands have been found infected. The origin of the infection is unknown. This is the first report of the disease in the United States since an infection on European and Japanese larch in eastern Massachusetts was eradicated (3).

In Maine, trees 5-36 cm in diameter were found infected. The oldest cankers were 11 yr old. In most locations, only branch cankers were observed and damage was rated as light, with some branch mortality. At two sites, however, along with branch cankers, numerous stem cankers occurred on trees 8-10 cm in diameter and a few trees had died. On an 8-cm-diameter tree, 21 stem cankers and 107 branch cankers were counted, all with numerous apothecia.

Larch canker has been a concern in Europe since the mid-1800s (4). All species of *Larix* and *Pseudolarix* are susceptible to this disease (1).

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Fig. 1. Distribution of European larch canker on eastern larch in Washington County, Maine.  $\bullet$  = Township where infection was found.