

Sirex distribution survey, November 1997

The presence of *Sirex noctilio* was sought along the coastal regions of the southern Cape, after its previous furthest distribution range was found to be as far as Bredasdorp after a recent survey was carried out, and *Sirex* was found in pines in woodlots in that area.

On this trip, Elmarie Engelke and Judy Moore went as far as Riversdal where *Sirex* has, as yet, not been found. The aim was then to work backwards towards Cape Town, along the coastal area until *Sirex* was found, to confirm its present furthest distribution point. The Vermaaklikheid road was taken to the coast from Riversdal, and then going east through two large pine woodlots on farms in the Blombos area. No *Sirex* was found in either of these woodlots, nor in other dead pines in windbreaks looked at in that area as far as Stilbaai. A woodlot of over 60 trees was looked at on the road between Stilbaai and the N2 in which seven dead trees were found, none of which showed evidence of past or present *Sirex* infestation.

Heading back towards Cape Town, a road just west of Heidelberg along the N2 was taken down to Witsand on the coastline. No pine trees were evident on this road, but on the road between Witsand and Swellendam on the N2, a large woodlot of *Pinus radiata* pines was spotted on the farm of Mr and Mrs van Deventer, about 36 km south of Swellendam and about 18 km north of Witsand. Dead trees in this woodlot were peppered with *Sirex* emergence holes, indicating that *Sirex* had already been in the area for at least a year. A further confirmation of the presence of *Sirex* was found in dead *Pinus radiata* pines in a plantation on the Rolandale farms about 7 km east of Swellendam. Thus it is presumed that *Sirex* must also occur in the SAFCOL Swellendam plantation where it dispersed due east into the adjacent Rolandale plantations.