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# Invertebrate of the Month

## March 2010



### ***Phoracantha semipunctata***

The longicorn beetle *Phoracantha semipunctata* belongs to the beetle family Cerambycidae. The larvae are commonly referred to as bardi grubs and they bore under the bark of eucalypts causing the sculpted channels often seen on dead eucalypt stems and branches. Oval holes in the wood are caused by late stage larvae just before they turn into the adult beetle shown above. This species is indigenous to Australia and very rarely are a problem here in live eucalypt trees. The adults lay eggs on or in bark crevices of newly dead or dying trees and as a consequence are an indicator of severe stress. In Australia the main concern for this insect is in the timber yard, where they will infest newly harvested logs. However this insect has the distinction of being one of Australia's accidental exports and elsewhere in the world is considered a problem, particularly in eucalypt plantations. Therefore much international research has been conducted on this species in an attempt to understand its biology.