

# An Illustrated Key to the Ips, Orthotomicus, and Pseudips of North America 

## Introduction and use of this key

Along with members of the genus Dendroctonus, bark beetles in the genus Ips are among the most important members of the subfamily Scolytinae in both the ecological and economic senses. Several of the species are well known for widespread damage in conifer forests and plantations. Two related taxa, some members of which have been traditionally placed within Ips, are also treated herein: Orthotomicus Ferrari and Pseudips Cognato. Accurate identification of members of these taxa is important to tracking the distribution and impacts thereof, especially where human actions may be exerting influence, as in the case of introduced invasive species.

Despite the justifiable recognition of the flaws and limitations inherent in a dichotomous key, some taxa do not lend themselves to matrix-based identification aids, such as LUCID ${ }^{\text {TM }}$. This is particularly so of taxa such as $I p s$ and the other two genera, whose identification is largely dependent upon the assessment of subtle character states, confounded by sexual dimorphism and variability in character expression. As a consequence, this key is arranged in the standard dichotomous manner.

The key is largely based upon that used by the late Stephen L. Wood in his landmark 1982 treatment of North and Central American bark beetles. Several characters I have found unreliable or felt were too difficult to assess have been omitted. Unlike Wood, I've had the privilege of access to superb digital imagery, along with access to

# An Illustrated Key to the Ips, Orthotomicus, and Pseudips of North America 

## Introduction and use of this key (continued)

the talents of a true artist of that medium, Steven A. Valley. Consequently, the users of this key will be able to rely on images of all the character states utilized herein. This is a vast improvement over reliance primarily upon textual descriptions, although identification of these bark beetles is still anything but a "snap".

There are twenty-three species of Ips described from North America north of Mexico. I've also included two exotic species of concern. Four species of Orthotomicus and two species of Pseudips are addressed.

Identification of these insects can be challenging. Several of the characters used for identification require subtle interpretation. Identification can be complicated by sexual dimorphism, especially with regard to structures of the frons and the elytral declivity, and great intraspecific variation in size. Many of the diagnostic features involve the number and form of spines on the elytral declivity. Unfortunately, the spines are subject to breakage, developmental malformation, and great individual intraspecific variability. Sometimes the spines on one side of the declivity differ in appearance and number from those on the other side. To some degree, this variability is also evident in the structures of the frons, particularly the presence or absence of tubecles. Caution must be used in species diagnosis based on a single specimen - if possible,

## An Illustrated Key to the Ips, Orthotomicus, and Pseudips of North America

## Introduction and use of this key (continued)

long series of specimens are desirable. Clean specimens are critical, especially on the frons and elytral apex. Debris, mites, and oils can obscure key features. Even with perfect specimens and long series, several species groups are difficult to reliably determine and it may be necessary to submit material to a specialist. If available, host data may be critical to enabling an accurate identification.

A particular cautionary note: several of the images show pale brown or reddish brown specimens versus dark specimens, color is not a reliable characteristic. Recently eclosed adults are often pale, but darken with age.

This sign, $\because$, and blue text, indicate the species in question is an exotic species of regulatory concern.

## Acknowledgements

Although a great many people have helped with this project, I want to single out a few for special recognition, without whose help success would have been impossible:

Joshua Vlach, my long-suffering colleague at Oregon Department of Agriculture, who helped borrow, prepare, and curate specimens, and, more importantly, vetted my ideas on how best to present this information.

David Maddison, Curator, and Chris Marshall, Collections Manager, Oregon State University Arthropod Collection, for generous loans of material, often on short notice.

Bob Rabaglia, U.S. Forest Service, Forest Health Protection, Maryland, for bringing several species to my attention and generously loaning some as well.

Anthony Cognato, Curator, Michigan State University Insect Collection, for advice on how best to differentiate some species of $I p s$.

## Basic body parts Lateral view



## Basic body parts Dorsal view



## Striae and interstriae



## Counting spines



Counting the pairs of major spines on the elytral declivity of $I p s$ and related bark beetles is essential for their identification. Spine pairs are numbered starting from the suture. There may be from 3 to 6 pairs. Normally, pair 3 is the largest. There may be pairs of minor spines near pair 1, but these are not counted. A sixspined $I p s$ is shown here.

## Parts of the head



## Parts of the antenna



Elytral declivity with 3 pairs of major spines (*numbers on images denote spine pairs) (a-c)......................................................................................... 2
Elytral declivity with 4-6 pairs of major spines (d-g)


## 2 (1)

Elytral declivity with 3rd pair spines short, no longer than 2nd pair (a-c)..... 3 Elytral declivity with 3rd pair spines longer than 2nd pair (d-f)................. 4


2a-c. Spines 3 no longer than spines 2 .

| 2d-f. Spines |
| :--- |
| 3 longer than |
| spines 2. |



## 3 (2): Part I

Antennal club sutures recurved (a); elytral declivity narrowly excavate, with lower declivital carinate margin not reaching bottom pair of spines, spines 1 and 2 approximate ( $2 \& 3$ at least twice distance between 1 and 2 ) ( $\mathbf{c}$-d); portraits (g-h)....................................Orthotomicus caelatus (Bichofi)
Antennal club sutures procurved (b); elytral declivity broadly excavate, lower declivital carinate margin about at level of spines 3 , spines 1 and 2 distant (about as distant as $2 \& 3$ ) (e-f); portrait (i)
female Orthotomicus erosus (Wollaston)


3b. Female Orthotomicus erosus: antennal club sutures procurved.


## 3 (2): Part II



3c, d. Orthotomicus
caelatus: declivity
narrowly excavate;
carina not reaching
bottom pair of
spines, spines $1 \&$
2 closer together.


3e, f. Orthtomicus erosus female: declivity broadly excavate; carina extending beyond bottom pair of spines, spines $1 \& 2$ distant from each other.


## 3 (2): Part III

## Orthotomicus caelatus (Dichoff)



2g. Female.


## 3 (2): Part IV <br> Orthotomicus erosus (Wollaston) :) <br> Female



## 4 (3): Part I

$\square$
Elytral declivital spine 3 flattened, emarginate at apex (a); portraits (d, e).... Ips emarginatus (LeConte)*
*Females of this species rarely have a fourth spine - these would key to couplet 17.
Elytral declivital spine 3 conical or cylindrical, pointed at apex (b, c)........ 5


## 4 (3): Part II

## Ips emarginatus (LeConte) <br> - three spined



## 5 (4)

Elytral declivital spine 3 conical, not constricted before apex (a,b); antennal club sutures weakly procurved, almost straight (d)......... 6

Elytral declivital spine 3 capitate, with a distinct constriction before apex (c); antennal club sutures very strongly procurved (e)......... 7


## 6 (5): Part I

Elytral declivital spine 3 tapered from base and pointed (a); frons without median tubercles (c); portraits (e, f)..........Orthotomicus latidens (LeConte) Sides of elytral declivital spine 3 more or less parallel on basal $2 / 3$ and blunt at apex (b); frons with a pair of large tubercles near center (d); portraits ( $\mathbf{g}$, h) (known only from California)...............Orthotomicus spinifer (Eichoff)


## 6 (5): Part II



## 6 (5): Part II

## Orthotomicus latidens (LeConte)



## 6 (5): Part III

## Orthotomicus spinifer (Dichofi)



## 7 (5): Part I

Punctures on posterior $1 / 3$ of pronotum closely spaced and those behind summit granulate or connected by strigose lines, pronotal pubescence more abundant, coarser (a); portraits (c, d)......................Pseudips concinnus (Manneheim)* Punctures on posterior $1 / 3$ of pronotum distantly spaced and those behind summit usually not granulate or connected by strigose lines, pronotal pubescence finer, apparently less abundant (b); portraits (e, f)......Pseudips mexicanus (Hopkins)*
*It can be extremely difficult to distinguish between these species. Pseudips concinnus is known only from coastal localities west of the Cascades from Alaska to northernmost California while P. mexicanus has a much greater known range. Outside of west coastal locales, P. mexicanus is most likely.


## 7 (5): Part III

## Pseudips concinnus (Mannerheim)



## 7 (5): Part IV

## Pseudips mexicanus (Hopkins)



## 8 (1) $\square$

Lateral margins of elytral declivity with 5 (a) or 6 (b) pairs of spines...... 9
Lateral margins of elytral declivity with 4 pairs of spines (c)............... 15


8c. 4 pairs spines.

## 9 (8)

Lateral margins of elytral declivity with 6 pairs of spines (a).... 10
Lateral margins of elytral declivity with 5 pairs of spines (b).... 11 $\square$


## 10 (9): Part I

3rd pair of declivital spines largest (a); frons without a raised line above the median tubercle (c); larger, 5.5-8.2 mm in length; portrait (e)....Ips calligraphus (Germar) *Ips apache Lanier, from s. AZ \& MX, can only be reliably distinguished via DNA.
4th pair of declivital spines largest (b); frons with a short, transverse raised line above median tubercle (d); smaller, $3.5-5.9 \mathrm{~mm}$ in length; portrait (f). Ips sexdentatus (Boerner)
10a. 3rd pair declivital spines largest.
10b. 4th pair declivital spines largest.


## 10 (9): Part II



## 10 (9): Part III

## Ips calligraphus (Germar)



## 10 (9): Part IV

## Ips sexdentatus (Boerner) :



## 11 (9): Part I $\square$

Elytral declivital spine 4 closer to spine 3 than to spine $5(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{c})$; declivital surface dull (c); portrait (e)..................................Ips knausi Swaine* *Normal I. knausi have a large, flattened, emarginate spine 3 and will key to couplet 17. Some females have this spine greatly reduced so that the apices of the emargination appear as separate spines. These will key here.
Elytral declivital spine 4 as close or closer to spine 5 as to spine 3 (b,d); declivital surface shiny (d).


## 11 (9): Part II



11d. Elytral declivital surface shiny.

11c. Elytral declivital surface dull.


## 11 (9): Part III Ips knausi Swaine* <br> " 5 -spined"



## 12 (11) I



Elytral declivital spine 1 distinctly closer to suture than to spine 2 (a)......... 13
Elytral declivital spine 1 at least far from suture as from spine 2 (b). $\square$


## 12 (11) II

Ips grandicollis is now in the West: Idaho, Montana, \& Utah. Existing Ips keys do not explicitly compare this species to the western " 5 -spiners". Although we have no images yet of the relevant characters, here is a list of character states to do so.

## I. grandicollis

1. Lateral frons sparsely tuberculate, tubercles well separated.
2. Strial punctures much larger (esp. stria 1), (due to interstrial compression, these appear quadrate) and more-or-less contiguous, $\sim 4$ times the diameter of the interstrial punctures.
3. The interstriae just anterior of the elytral declivity have just a few low spines, so the interstriae and striae are clearly distinguished.
4. The first declivital spine is in the middle of of interstria 2.
5. The interstriae are most often, but not always, smooth and flat or slightly convex.

## Western ' 5 -spined" Ips

1. Lateral frons densely tuberculate, tubercles more-or-less contiguous.
2. Strial punctures much smaller (esp. stria 1) and well separated, all appear more-or-less round, $\sim$ twice the diameter of the interstrial punctures.
3. The interstriae just anterior of the elytral have many low spines, so distinguishing the interstriae and striae is difficult.
4. The first declivital spine is in interstria 3, although it is often shifted toward stria 2.
5. The interstriae are most often, but not always, distinctly wrinkled and convex.

## 13 (12): Part I

Male frons with one enlarged median tubercle at or above epistomal margin (a); female elytral declivital spines $2 \& 3$ connected at base by raised ridge (c); range extends from Canada to Honduras - specimens north of AZ are probably this species; portraits (e, f).................. Ips grandicollis (Bichofi)

* Ips cribricollis Eichoff, from s. NM \& MX, can only be reliably distinguished via DNA.

Male frons with a row of enlarged tubercles along epistomal margin, the transverse pair often largest (b); female elytral declivital spines 2 \& 3 separate at base (d); northern limits of range Arizona and New Mexico;



13a. Male frons with one median tubercle.


13b. Male frons with multiple tubercles.

## 13 (12): Part I



13d. Female declivital spines
$2 \& 3$ separate at base.

13c. Female declivital spines $2 \& 3$ connected at base.


## 13 (12): Part III Ips grandicollis (Eichoff)



13e. Female.


## 13 (12): Part IV Ips lecontei Swaine



## 14 (12): Part I $\square$

Fovea on frons shallow and small, upper margin of large median tubercle in in male distant from epistoma and as high as upper margin of eyes (a); at least 4.6 mm in total length; portraits (c, d)................./ps montanus (Bichoff)
Fovea on frons deeply impressed, upper margin of large median tubercle in male almost touching epistoma and lower than upper margin of eyes (b); no more than 4.3 mm in total length; portraits (e-h)...Ips confusus (LeConte), Ips hoppingi Lanier, and Ips paraconfusus Lanie:*
*The characters differentiating I. paraconfusus from I. confusus and I. hoppingi are very subtle and I. confusus and I. hoppingi cannot be differentiated via external characters. Ips paraconfusus is known from pines in CA, w. NV, OR, \& WA. Ips confusus is found in Pinus edulis and P. monophylla in AZ, CA, CO, NM, NV, UT, WY, \& MX, while $I$. hoppingi is found in P. cembroides in s. AZ, e. TX, \& MX.


## 14 (12): Part II Ips montanus (Eichoff)



## 14 (12): Part III Ips paraconfusus Lanier*



# 14 (12): Part IV Ips confusus (LeConte)* Ips hoppingi Lanier*: 



## 15 (8) $\square$

Surface of elytral declivity dull, roughened between punctures (a-b)...... 16
Surface of elytral declivity shiny, smooth between punctures (c)........... 18 $\square$

15a, b. Declivital surface dull, rough.
15c. Declivital surface shiny, smooth.


## 16 (15): Part I

Elytral declivital spine 3 smaller and cylindrical, capitate, and pointed at apex (a); portrait (d)..................Ips typographus (Linnaeus) :
Elytral declivital spine 3 very large, flattened, and emarginate at apex (b-c).

16 a. Declivital spine 3 smaller, capitate, apically pointed.


16b-c. Declivital spine 3 large, flattened, apically emarginate.


## 16 (15): Part II

 Ips typographus (Linnaeus) :

## 17 (16): Part I

No punctures on elytral interstriae (a); portrait (c)...Ips emarginatus (LeConte)* *This species is more likely to key out at couplet 4 because spine 4 is most often absent, except in rare females.
Punctures present on elytral interstriae (b); portraits (d, e).....Jps knausi Swaine


# 17 (16): Part II Ips emarginatus (LeConte) <br> - four spined 



## 17 (16): Part III Ips knausi Swaine



## 18 (15): Part I $\square$

Spine pair 2 on elytral declivity largest (much larger than 3rd) and broadly lobate (a); spine pair 4 is displaced toward suture, not on edge of declivity (e); portrait (h).....................male Orthotomicus erosus (Wollaston) : $\because$ Spine pair 2 no larger than pair $3(\mathbf{b - c})$ and if 2 is lobate and large, pair 3 is longest ( $\mathbf{d}$ ), all spine pairs on edge of declivity ( $\mathbf{f}-\mathbf{g}$ )19
$\square$


18a. Male Orthotomicus erosus: spine pair 2 largest and lobate.

18. b-d. Spine pair 2 smaller, not lobate.
c. Spine pair 2 lobate, large, but short.

## 18 (15): Part II



18e. Male Orthotomicus erosus: spine pair 4 displaced toward suture, not on edge of declivity.


18f-g. All spine pairs on edge of declivity.

## 18 (15): Part III Orthotomicus erosus (Wollaston) :) <br> Male



## 19 (18)

Discal interstriae impunctate (except near declivity in some species) (a) 20

## Discal interstriae with irregular median row of setose punctures (b) (*some specimens may have this character restricted to the apical half of the elytra)



19a. Discal interstriae impunctate.
19b. Discal interstriae punctate, setose throughout.

## 20 (19): Part I

3rd spine on elytral declivity symmetrically and broadly capitate (a); frons with a transverse pair of large median tubercles (d); portraits ( $\mathbf{g}, \mathbf{h}$ ).
.Ips perturbatus (Bichofif)
3rd declivital spine either asymmetrically and narrowly capitate (b) or conical and not capitate (c); frons with a single large median tubercle (e) or without a large median tubercle.


## 20 (19): Part II



# 20 (19): Part III Ips perturbatus (Eichofi) 



## 21 (20) $\square$

Sutures of antennal club broadly bisinuate (first suture is normally the most distinct and diagnostic (a); no more than 4.3 mm in length.
Sutures of antennal club narrowly, strongly bisinuate (the first suture is normally the most distinct and diagnostic) (b); 4.2 to 5.4 mm in length...... 26


## 22 (21): Part I

In dorsal view, the apex of elytron is a narrow ridge perpendicular to the posterior slope of the declivity (a); declivital spines are short cones in both sexes (c, d); portraits ( $\mathbf{g}, \mathbf{h}$ ).........................Ips avulsus (Bichoff)
In dorsal view, the apex of elytron projects as a broad shelf perpendicular to the posterior slope of the declivity (b); spine 3 is capitate in male (e,f); portraits ( $\mathbf{i}, \mathbf{j}$ ).

22a. Ips avulsus: apex of elytron a narrow ridge.


22b. Apex of elytron a strongly projecting shelf.

## 22 (21): Part II



## 22 (21): Part III Ips avulsus (Bichoff)



## $23(22) \square$

In lateral view, spine 3 on elytral declivity conical (females) (a)................... 24
In lateral view, spine 3 on elytral declivity elongate, capitate (males) (b)........ 25 $\square$


## 24 (23): Part I

In posterior view, elytral declivital spines $2 \& 3$ on a line drawn between spines 1 \& 4 (a); in lateral view, spines 2 \& 3 shorter, smaller (c); in dorsal view, spines 2 \& 3 pointed toward suture (e); portrait (g); distribution AZ \& MX Ips bonanseai (Hopkins)

In posterior view, elytral declivital spines 2 \& 3 laterad of a line drawn between spines $1 \& 4$ (b); in lateral view, spines $2 \& 3$ longer, larger (d); in dorsal view, spines $2 \& 3$ erect (f); portrait (h); distributed throughout much of North America.


## 24 (23): Part II



## 24 (23): Part III Ips bonanseai (Hopkins) - female



## 24 (23): Part IV Ips pini (Say) - female



## 25 (23): Part I $\square$

In lateral view, spines $2 \& 3$ shorter and smaller, spine 3 separated from spine 2 by less than the height of spine 3 (a); portrait (c); distribution AZ \& MX.......................Ips bonarnseai (Hopkins)
In lateral view, spines $2 \& 3$ longer and larger, spine 3 separated from spine 2 by about the height of spine 3 (b); portrait (d); throughout much of North America.....................Ips pini (Say)


## 25 (23): Part II

## Ips bonanseai (Hopkins) - male



## 25 (23): Part III Ips pini (Say) - male



## 26 (21): Part I $\square$

Frons with median tubercle connected to epistoma tubercle by a ridge (a); elytral strial punctures larger, interstriae only slightly broader than puncture diameter (d); elytral declivital spine 1 about equidistant from spine 2 and suture, spine 4 closer to posterior ridge than to spine $3(\mathbf{f})$; portraits $(\mathbf{h}, \mathbf{i})$.
.Ips integer (Bichofi)
Median tubercle of frons not connected to a median epistomal by a ridge (b, c); elytral strial punctures smaller, interstriae about twice as broad as puncture diameter (e); elytral declivital spine 1 closer to suture than to spine 2 , spine 4 about equidistant from posterior ridge and spine $3(\mathbf{g})$; portraits ( $\mathbf{j}, \mathbf{k}$ )

Ips plastographus (LeConte)


## 26 (21): Part II



## 26 (21): Part III Ips integer (Eichoff)



## 26 (21): Part IV Ips plastographus (LeConte)



## 27 (19): Part I $\square$

Antennal club with sutures straight (a); first five elytral interstriae with setose punctures only in about posterior half of elytra (e); female frons not protruberant

Antennal club with sutures from weakly bisinuate to strongly and acutely angulate (b-d); first five elytral interstriae with setose punctures throughout length of elytra (f); female frons variable, but often protruding and pilose (h-k); representative portraits ( $\mathbf{n}, \mathbf{o}$ )... The "4-spined fuwries" or "pig-snouted spruce Ips": I. borealis Swaine, I. hunteri Swaine, I. pilifrons Swaine, I. tridens (Mannerheim), and I. woodi Thatche *The species boundaries of these described species are uncertain and the characters separating them are vague at best.


## 27 (19): Part II



## 27 (19): Part III



27h. Female frons
 protuberant, not pilose.

27i-k. Female frons protuberant, pilose.


## 27 (19): Part IV Ips perroti Swaine



## 27 (19): Part V

Ips borealis Swaine, I. hunteri Swaine, I. pilifrons Swaine, I. tridens (Mannerheim), and I. woodi Thatcher


