

SURVEY OF XYLOPHAGOUS INSECTS IN CHURCHES AND CHAPELS IN SERRO AND NEIGHBORING CITY BELONGING TO THE DIAMOND PATH OF THE ROYAL ROAD, BRAZIL-MG

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The xylophagous insects attack all kind of cellulosic materials such as wood, furniture, books, papers and clothes. There are several xylophagous insect species, but termites (Isoptera) and beetles (Coleoptera) are the most important economically. The objective of this study was to survey the species of xylophagous insects present in the architectonic religious set of Serro, Datas, Mendanha, Pedro Lessa, Três Barras da Estrada Real, Milho Verde, São Gonçalo do Rio das Pedras, Itapanhoacanga e Deputado Augusto Clementino, belonging to the Diamonds Path of the Royal Road, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil. It was inspected 18 buildings among churches and chapels. Initially a questionnaire was applied to evaluate the knowledge of the responsible for the building in relation to the physical conditions of it and to the xylophagous insects. After that, it was performed in each building, a detailed visual inspection of the mobile welfare and the entire collection. It was detected xylophagous insect activity, damaging pieces of wood, in 83% of buildings inspected. These insects are divided into three distinct groups, Isoptera, Coleoptera and Lepidoptera, damaging pieces of wood on the main altar, chancel, nave, sacristy, the bell tower, floor, ceiling, window and door. The termite species found were *Cryptotermes brevis*, *Nasutitermes* sp. and *Syntermes* sp.; the woodworm were *Lyctus* sp., *Tricorynus herbarius* and *Anobium punctatum*; and clothes-moth *Tineola uterella*. The conservation status of the inspected buildings is considered serious. The infestation of xylophagous is in an advanced stage, needing intervention, since it put in danger part of local and national history.

Key Words Historic buildings, damage, termites, borers

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