

Gypsy Moth: Stop The Spread

Gypsy Moth, *Lymantria dispar* (L.)



EGGS are laid in elliptical, one inch diameter masses covered by tan scales and may contain from several hundred to over a thousand eggs.



LARVAE are grey bodied, have five pairs of blue dots followed by six pairs of brick-red dots on their backs and are covered with long hairs. Larvae hatch in early spring, feed and pupate by early summer. They may reach 2 or more inches in length. Large larvae often hide during daylight hours.



PUPAE are brownish-black and are usually found in sheltered locations. Adults emerge about two weeks after pupation to mate and lay eggs.



ADULTS can be found from June to mid-July. Females are heavy bodied, mostly white, about 1 1/2 inches long and cannot fly. They have wavy black lines on their wings. Males are brown, about 1 inch long, have feathery antennae and have black, wavy wing markings.

CONCERNS: Gypsy moth (GM) is a serious defoliator of hardwood trees and shrubs. GM was accidentally introduced into New England in the late 1800s and continues to spread across North America. In addition to being an overall nuisance, larvae may defoliate and kill trees and can cause allergic reactions in some people.

GM is not currently established in Georgia, however established infestations occur in northeastern and Great Lakes states southward through Virginia and into North Carolina.

DESCRIPTION: There is only one generation per year — they overwinter as eggs.

HOW THEY MOVE: Small larvae move short distances on air currents. However, most movement to new locations occurs as a result of transport of infested items by man. Larvae may pupate, or females may lay egg masses on-or-inside of almost anything left outdoors; including dog houses, firewood, recreation vehicles, lawn care equipment, packing crates, pallets, etc. If infested items are moved to a new location, a new infestation may become established.

REGULATION: A federal quarantine regulates movement of items from infested areas to non-infested areas. A thorough inspection of anything that may harbor GM must be done before the item(s) can be moved to non-infested areas. Any life stages found during the inspection must be removed and destroyed before transport occurs.

MONITORING: A nationwide program using small triangular-shaped traps baited with a sex pheromone that attracts males is used to monitor for possible infestations. Federal and state agencies appropriately deal with any isolated infestations that are found in advance of the natural spread. By law, isolated infestations must be eradicated.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

If you suspect that you have seen GM, immediately contact the nearest Cooperative Extension Service or Georgia Forestry Commission Office.

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