



Exotic pests

- ▶ Native to Europe and Asia
- ▶ Introduced to North America in 1869
- ▶ Now infests Maine south to North Carolina and northwest through Wisconsin
- ▶ Eastern Wisconsin is generally, but not highly, infested, and counties are under a quarantine

Damage

- ▶ Caterpillars feed on leaves of up to 500 species of trees and shrubs, favoring oak
- ▶ Defoliate millions of acres annually in the United States
- ▶ Defoliated trees grow a new set of leaves, but are weakened and may be killed by other pests
- ▶ Several small outbreaks with minor defoliation occurred in Wisconsin in 1999

Costs to individuals

- ▶ Expense to homeowners of removing and replacing dead trees
- ▶ Potential decline in property values from tree loss
- ▶ Allergic reactions to shed skins and droppings from caterpillars
- ▶ Nuisance of having thousands of caterpillars in the backyard

Costs to businesses

- ▶ Costs of inspections and treatments for nursery and Christmas tree growers, timber interests and paper companies shipping materials to non-infested areas
- ▶ Lost tourism dollars
- ▶ Environmental damage

Life cycle

- ▶ Caterpillars emerge in mid-May to early June and begin feeding
- ▶ Stop feeding and pupate, wrapping a cocoon-like shell around themselves, in late June to mid-July
- ▶ Adult moths emerge from pupae, mate and die in mid-July to early August
- ▶ Eggs over-winter protected in a blanket of hair from the mother's body

Rapid spread

- ▶ Each female lays an average of 600 eggs
- ▶ Gypsy moths thrive in many habitats because they are not picky eaters
- ▶ Because they're not native to North America, they have few natural enemies
- ▶ Egg masses are often deposited on manmade objects that carry them to new areas

**Goals of Wisconsin
Cooperative Gypsy
Moth Program**

- ▶ Keep outbreaks, or population explosions that defoliate trees, infrequent in quarantine area of eastern Wisconsin
- ▶ Slow the spread of the gypsy moth in central third of the state
- ▶ Eradicate isolated populations in western part of the state

Program expenditures

- ▶ Wisconsin spends about \$2 million a year on gypsy moth control
- ▶ Every dollar spent to slow the spread of the gypsy moth saves \$2 to \$8 in costs to homeowners, businesses, and government

For more information, call 1-800-642-MOTH