

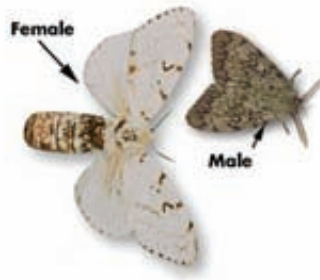
- These egg masses will over-winter on trees; cold weather does not effect eggs.



Gypsy moth egg masses, over-wintering stage.
Photo by Barry B. Robinson

- As spring approaches, the cycle repeats itself across our forests.
- The gypsy moth is an outbreak pest – in some years it is barely noticed, while in others its population increases greatly and then drops again. Researchers believe this rise and fall of

moth numbers is probably due to many factors. Factors include a fungus that seems to be more prevalent when the spring weather is cool and damp and a virus that reduces their numbers when populations soar – much like us catching the common cold after being in a crowded, enclosed situation during the winter.



Control Options

- There are spray treatments that can be applied by helicopter or fixed-wing plane for large acreages and difficult to reach locations (as was done in Montgomery and other surrounding counties this May as part of the Virginia Gypsy Moth Suppression Program administered by VDACS).

- The products applied aerially this year were *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk) and diflubenzuron (Dimilin). Btk is a stomach poison to moths & butterflies only. Dimilin is an insect growth regulator (restricts growth into next life stage), but it can affect all insects that go through a molting process. Dimilin can also create problems for aquatic organisms that go through this molting process such as crawfish, therefore it is not used near open bodies of water or perennial streams and is a restricted use pesticide. These same application products, and others recommended for control, can be made on smaller blocks of trees by registered commercial pesticide applicators via bucket trucks and high-pressure spray rigs.
- The banding of individual trees with a trap feature, mechanical removal of caterpillars or egg masses, spraying egg masses with oil-based solutions, release of mating disruptors, feeding by natural predators such as the white-footed mouse and a tiny parasitic wasp all provide some control (though limited) of the gypsy moth.



Top left photo, Barry B. Robinson. Bottom left photo, John McLeod, III.

The effects of gypsy moth defoliation.

PLEASE REPORT GYPSY MOTHS

For more information visit: <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/content/1146/98/133/1759.aspx>
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(Please call first to insure he is available to meet with you).