

How to Trap Winter Moths with Barrier Bands

Sticky barrier bands can be effective in preventing female winter moths from crawling up trees to lay their eggs in the fall because the flightless females get hung up in the gum.

The bands can also be effective in spring when young caterpillars spin “parachutes” and “balloon” to a new food source often landing on the ground. They can be caught in the gum when trying to ascend the tree.

It may not be practical to band every tree on your property. Aim on banding specimen trees that matter most to you. Preferred host plants include oak, maple, birch, elm, ash, apple, crabapple, cherry and blueberry.

Materials

- A large roll of 2” wide grey duct tape and/or soft band (insulation or foam tape)
 - Soft bands of insulation or foam tape may work better in hard to reach locations or on heavily ridged bark.
- A tub of a thick tacky substance that will stay put on the tape in warm weather:
 - *Tree Tanglefoot*, or any other product made for this purpose.
- Any applicator such as a spatula or putty knife and staple gun for soft bands.



Directions

1. Do not put sticky material directly on the bark of the tree as it may injure the tree.
2. Sticky barrier bands should be in place before the mating flights of the Winter Moth in November.
3. Position bands 4 ½ ft. above ground.
4. Always be sure the bark is dry before applying tape. Brush off lichens or other materials that may prevent good adhesion of the tape.
5. Once tape or bands are in place, spread a layer of Tree Tanglefoot on the band.

Method 1 - Duct Tape:

Pull a length of Duct tape from the roll and begin applying it around the tree, sticky side against bark. Press into crevasses so the critters cannot sneak underneath. Let tape ends overlap to complete the encirclement. Band should be 6 inches wide.

Method 2- Insulation or foam tape

Cut a 6 inch wide band of insulation or foam, long enough to wrap around the tree trunk. Place the soft or spongy side on the bark. Apply duct tape over the material once secured. Tightly staple the band to the tree trunk. Make sure it fills in the bark’s cracks and crevices.

Method 1 & 2 - Apply Tacky Substance:

Using a spatula or putty knife apply the tacky substance (*Tanglefoot*) to the outside of the duct tape. Leave 1/4” margin on tape so the goo does not get on the tree bark.

Commercial Products



Collar type barrier kit – Comes complete with foam tape and sticky substance on underside of collar.

Sold locally by the Harpswell Garden Club, call 725-2660 for details.

BugBarrier Tree Band kits can be purchased from: Envirometrics Systems Inc., call 800-379-9677

Tools needed: scissors and putty knife.



You may invent your own method of banding your trees using the same basic principles laid out here.

Maintenance:

- Periodically inspect the barrier bands. In time they may get clogged with dirt and debris and lose their effectiveness. Hand pick the larger flotsam, or anything forming a “bridge” over the band, with tweezers.
- You may reapply the sticky substance to the bands, again avoiding the tree bark.



Two Banding Methods - Duct tape & Tanglefoot and Foam insulation, duct tape & Tanglefoot

- If band becomes separated from the bark by any means, press back into crevasses, or replace the whole band and start over. Small animals may pull on the tape and thwart your efforts.
- Do not be discouraged if you see no moths on the band. Females may circle underneath and give up. If they cannot lay their eggs high enough the hatchlings will have a longer trek to food and many will starve on the trip.



Barrier band with male Winter moths – early December 2012 .

Summary:

- Sticky barrier bands are more reasonably priced than other methods of control and do target the evil-doers effectively.
- They are, however, time-consuming and require the presence of the homeowner at a less than ideal season.
- Aesthetically they are not the most beautiful of solutions. Still they do the job of slowing down the invasion of these aliens.
- After a hard frost curtails mating flights, (January) you may remove the bands by carefully rolling up as you would a carpet and placing in a bag for proper disposal.
- Focus on the trees you want to protect.

Additional Winter Moth Information

Instructions for tree barrier banding at:

http://winnipeg.ca/publicworks/bugline/cank_erworms/treebanding.stm
(includes instructional video)

<http://extension.umd.edu/publications/PDFs/FS476.pdf>

www.beyondpesticides.org

http://www.treebands.com/applying_bug_barrier

References:

Town of Harpswell:
<http://www.harpswell.maine.gov/> Under Conservation Commission

Maine Forest Service:
<http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/InvasiveThreats.htm>

University of Massachusetts:
<http://extension.umass.edu/landscape/news/winter-moth-update-4262012>



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