

WINTER MOTH FACTS



CATERPILLAR LARVA



PUPA



ADULT FEMALE



ADULT MALE

DID YOU KNOW...

- In Spring of 2012, Winter moth (*Operophtera brummata*) was identified defoliating hardwood trees in South Harpswell and in coastal communities from Kittery to Bristol.
- The pale green inchworm caterpillars are one of the first to hatch in the spring. They feed on both flower, leaf buds, and then on the expanding leaves.
- Treatments are only effective when eggs or caterpillars are present - February to June.
- The adult caterpillars finish feeding in mid June, spin cocoons and pupate in the ground until early winter.
- Keeping trees well nourished and well watered early in the season may help defoliated trees grow new leaves.
- Trees attacked by Winter moth will survive for many years. It takes a number of years of complete defoliation to kill most trees.
- Winter moth cocoons are in the soil from late May until late November. **Do not move plants or yard litter from infested areas!** Any plants or mulch moved from infested areas can have Winter moth in the soil.
- When using any pesticide, insect damage must be balanced with potential damage to the plant and other non-target species. **Btk kills all butterflies and moths. Horticultural oils are toxic to fish and shellfish – Do not use near the ocean or waterways.**

References:

Town of Harpswell: <http://www.harpswell.maine.gov> / Left sidebar, 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>

