

spongy moth

WISCONSIN COOPERATIVE
SPONGY MOTH PROGRAM

impact

exotic pest

- Caterpillars feed on the leaves of up to 500 species of trees and shrubs, favoring oak
- May defoliate several million acres in the U.S. during the summer months;
- Defoliated trees grow a new set of leaves, but are weakened and may be killed by other pests.

impact on people

- Financial expense to homeowners and communities to remove and replace dead trees;
- Potential decline in property values from tree loss;
- Allergic reactions to caterpillar hair;
- Nuisance.

cost to businesses

- Inspections and treatments for nursery and Christmas tree growers, timber interests, and paper companies shipping materials to non-infested areas;
- Lost recreation dollars;
- Environmental damage.

rapid spread

- Spongy moths thrive in many habitats because they are not picky eaters;
- Because they're not native to North America, they have few natural enemies here;
- Egg masses are often moved long distances and into new areas on firewood, vehicles, tree trimmings, and other outdoor items;

Wisconsin's cooperative program goals

- The "Slow the Spread" program aims to delay the establishment of spongy moth in the western part of the state and to eradicate isolated populations there

1-800-642-MOTH (6684) | spongymoth.wi.gov

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION