



PEST FACT SHEET

AGRICULTURE & COMMUNITY SERVICES

FOREST TENT CATERPILLAR (*Malacosoma disstria*)

What is a forest tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma disstria*)?

This caterpillar is the larva of a moth that lives between 5-10 days. The caterpillar feeds on the newly emerging foliage of the tree.

Watch for a large group of hairy caterpillars with white keyhole shaped spots down the back.

They affect many types of deciduous trees including:

- Aspen
- Birch
- Fruit Trees

They appear between April and June.



Forest Tent Caterpillar

DAMAGE

When outbreaks occur, they cover extensive areas and can completely defoliate host trees.

They usually only kill trees after 3 or more years of reoccurring damage. By destroying the new growth on the tree, they can cause it stress and make the tree more susceptible to disease. They can also cause branches to die back.



Adult Moth

CONTROL

Colonies can be removed by hand or with pressurized water.

If you are worried about tree loss, insecticide can be used. BTK is a safe insecticide that will only affect caterpillars and leave other insects unharmed.

You can remove egg bands if you see them.



Egg Band