

WinterMoth Caterpillar

Wintermoth Operophtera brumata



Fig. 1
Male Wintermoth



Fig. 2
Female Wintermoth



Fig. 3
Wintermoth Caterpillar



The tiny green inchworms start with oaks, maples, fruit trees, ash, rose-of-sharon and blueberry bushes, but almost any leaves or flowers are fair game after that. One way to tell if you're going to be hit hard is to check your tree trunks for the tiny orange eggs the moths randomly scatter in bark crevices. Just before they hatch, the eggs turn bright red.

The inchworms usually hatch around April 20 and immediately weasel their way inside swelling leaf buds, where they cannot be reached by sprays. The leaves open in tatters. After that, the caterpillars are "free feeders"; they spread by swinging tree to tree like Tarzans on their own silken ropes when looking for a new food source.

Once there, the damage to the tree begins as the caterpillars work their way into the tree buds and leaves to feed.

Winter moth caterpillars can also drop from trees to nearby ornamental shrubs such as roses.

When feeding ends in mid-June the caterpillars migrate into the soil to pupate and emerge as moths.



Above is the damage the Winter Moth Caterpillars can do to your trees, please don't let this happen to your trees.