Forest Leaflet 13: Pear sawfly
Text: J.A. Drouin, F.J. Emond, and H.F. Cerezke
Illustration: G. Weber

Cat. No. Fo29-31/13E
ISBN 0-662-19020-3
ISSN 1183-8655

Forestry Canada
Northwest Region
Northern Forestry Centre
5320 – 122 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 3S5

When referring to this publication, please cite:
Drouin, J.A.; Emond, F.J.; Cerezke, H.F. 1991. Pear sawfly. For. Can., Northwest Reg., North. For. Cent., Edmonton, Alberta. For. Leafl. 13.

Cette publication est également disponible en français sous le titre *Tenthrède du poirier*.

Printed on recycled paper.

Canada

# Pear sawfly

Forestry Canada Forêts Canada

## Distribution and Hosts

The pear sawfly (*Caliroa cerasi* [Linnaeus]) is distributed throughout the world. In Canada its preferred hosts are cotoneaster, hawthorn, mountain-ash, pin cherry, and various other fruit trees. It is primarily a pest of ornamental trees and shrubs.

## Symptoms and Damage

The first indications of the presence of the pear sawfly are the yellow spots on host foliage that are caused by the conspicuous, shiny black, sluglike larvae feeding on upper leaf surfaces. As feeding progresses, the affected areas on individual leaves enlarge and merge, until the leaves look bleached. Trees and shrubs appear scorched when their damaged leaves then turn reddish brown. The trees look unsightly due to the affected foliage, which may drop prematurely. Healthy trees can withstand several years of moderate attack because damage occurs in late summer, near the end of the growing season. The mucous-coated larvae may be a nuisance during years of high pear sawfly populations.

## Causal Agents

Adult pear sawflies are small, black wasp-like insects, about 5 mm long, which emerge from mid-June until mid-July. Their eggs are deposited on the lower surfaces of the leaves. Larvae hatch in 9–15 days and migrate to upper leaf surfaces to feed, with each larva damaging several leaves before its development has been completed. When fully grown, larvae are about 11 mm long and have changed from black to a translucent yellowish green. They drop to the ground, where they overwinter in tiny, fragile cocoons spun just below the soil surface. Pupation usually occurs in the spring, but in suitable weather a smaller second generation may complete development before winter arrives.

## Prevention and Control

Trees and shrubs should be checked from about mid-July until late August for pear sawfly larvae and evidence of their feeding. Nonchemical control of the larvae is possible by washing them from foliage with strong streams of water from a garden hose; larvae may also be sprayed with a commercial insecticidal soap or with a solution of water and pure soap flakes. Some registered contact insecticides are available that are environmentally safe as well as effective. Trees and shrubs may also be treated with registered chemical insecticides to control pear sawfly infestations.

For the most recent information on chemicals available for control of this pest, call Agriculture Canada's Pesticides Directorate in Ottawa (toll-free) at 1-800-267-6315.

Chemical pesticides are toxic to humans, animals, birds, fish, and beneficial insects. Follow all instructions and precautions listed by the manufacturer.