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LARCH CASEBEARER, NELSON FOREST DISTRICT

MAY, 1978

R.D. (Bob) Erickson

The discoloration of western larch trees, due to the feeding of the larch casebearer, *Coleophora laricella*, is again apparent in many locations in the Nelson Forest District. The infestation has expanded slightly from the areas defoliated in 1977.

In the Creston area, defoliation is severe from Arrow Creek to Creston, south to Rykerts and north to Kootenay Lake, and along the Pend-d'Oreille River Valley. From Salmo to Fruitvale defoliation is moderate, and moderate to severe from Nelson to Castlegar. Along the Slocan Valley from Crescent Valley to Slocan Lake the defoliation is generally light, with pockets of severely defoliated trees. There are new small spots of severe defoliation from Kaslo to New Denver and from Edgewood to the beginning of the Monashee Pass.

This tiny larva lives in a mined needle, which provides shelter while feeding on other needles. There will be no more feeding this spring since the larvae are now pupating. Moths will emerge from the pupal cases in mid-June and lay eggs which will hatch this summer. The new small larvae will feed a little before overwintering, causing discoloration of the new foliage.

No tree mortality is expected this year, only some growth loss from the defoliation.

The parasite release programme to control the larch casebearer will continue in 1978.