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PEST REPORT

Pacific Forest Research Centre • 506 West Burnside Rd. • Victoria, B.C. • V8Z 1M5

June 1985

FOREST TENT CATERPILLAR

TRAIL, B.C. 1985

R. Turnquist, District FIDS Ranger
Forest Insect and Disease Survey

The forest tent caterpillar, Malacosoma disstria has moderately and severely defoliated about 125 ha of deciduous trees in the Warfield area west of Trail for the second consecutive year. Trees most severely affected are black cottonwood, trembling aspen, white birch, willow and elderberry with lombardy poplar, mountain ash, ornamental and fruit trees and roadside shrubs also affected.

Previous infestations of forest tent caterpillar in the Warfield and Trail areas occurred in 1961-63 and 1971-74.

A virus found in the currently active population may result in a collapse of the population this year. The Forest Insect and Disease Survey of the Canadian Forestry Service will conduct egg mass surveys this fall to assess potential populations for 1986.

Homeowners can reduce populations by clipping and destroying egg masses during the winter months. The grey masses, covered with a silvery-brown protective substance, are found completely encircling small twigs during the winter months. Additionally, early spring larval colonies can be clipped and burned before the larvae disperse to feed.

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