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April 1986

WINTER MOTH IN VICTORIA

R.L. Ferris
Forest Insect and Disease Survey

The winter moth, Operophtera brumata, has hatched and is defoliating deciduous trees on South Vancouver Island. First instar larvae were collected on April 3, 1986 along McKenzie Avenue near the University of Victoria by the Forest Insect and Disease Survey. Light to moderate defoliation is expected. Inspections made on March 18, 1986 were negative and the egg hatch began during the last week of March.

The winter moth is an introduced pest of mainly oak, maple and fruit trees. There has been recorded defoliation for the past 14 years. Introduced parasites have reduced the population and extent of the damage.

To control the winter moth, fruit and ornamental trees may be sprayed with insecticides. A first spray as soon as the larvae begin to feed, usually early April and a second about 2 weeks later, will reduce the population. Specific information may be obtained from a licensed pesticide dealer.

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