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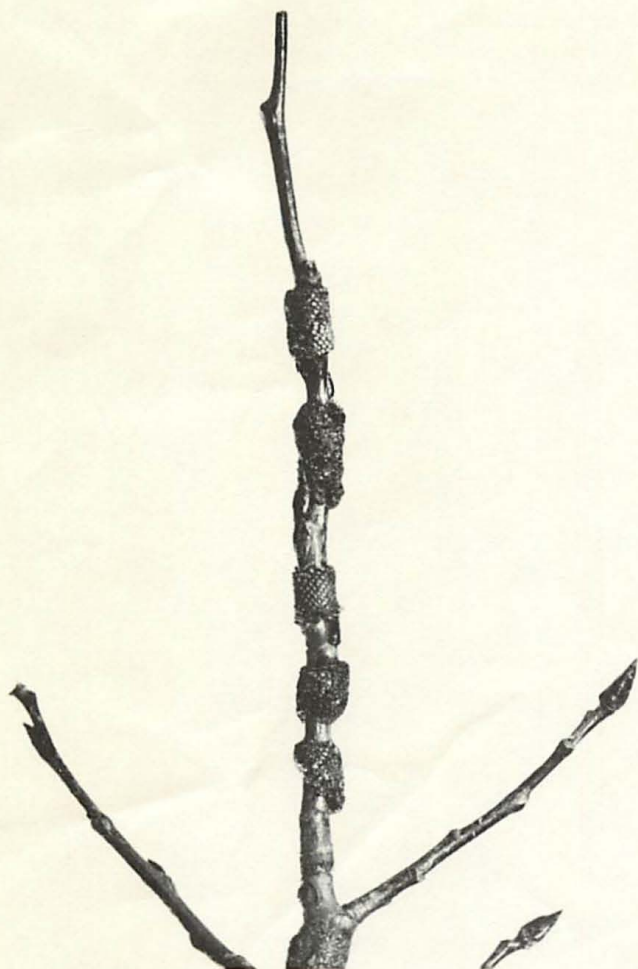
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# FORESTRY BULLETIN

April 1974.

## FOREST TENT CATERPILLAR ADVISORY



*Forest tent caterpillar egg bands on an aspen twig as found in a heavy infestation.*



*Full grown tent caterpillars that have migrated onto white birch from their favorite host tree--trembling aspen.*

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## FOREST TENT CATERPILLAR ADVISORY

The forest tent caterpillar\* is expected to strip trembling aspen trees of foliage and generally to be a nuisance in several specific widely-scattered areas of northwestern and northeastern Ontario in 1974. The localities most likely to be affected are those within and immediately surrounding 1973 infestations, as shown on the two accompanying maps. No serious problem is expected elsewhere in Ontario, however small localized or light infestations will occur in southern Ontario near Minden, Lindsay, Kaladar and west of Sharbot Lake.

The forest tent caterpillar, contrary to its name, does not construct a tent but feeds openly on trembling aspen and in some infestations on oak or hard maple. When high numbers are present, caterpillars leave their favorite host trees after stripping them of foliage and feed on other broad-leaved trees. When caterpillars run short of food or when they are full-grown they wander and it is at this time that they become a real nuisance for bushworkers and campers. Residents in areas wooded with trembling aspen may also be pestered by caterpillars crawling on their buildings and premises.

The egg bands of the tent caterpillar, each containing about 140 eggs, overwinter on the small twigs of host trees. In the spring when leaves are about to appear, eggs hatch and tiny black caterpillars begin to feed on the opening buds. By mid-June the caterpillars become full-grown and the results of their feeding becomes noticeable as trees appear stripped of their foliage. In late June larvae construct silken cocoons and pupate. The pale brown moths are in flight during July. Complete loss of leaves will not kill the trees and releafing, which also takes place in July, will restore much of the foliage.

Control begins with knowing a potential problem exists. This can be determined for a specific location by examining small trembling aspen trees until you recognize the egg bands, then by searching the branches of larger trees for eggs using binoculars to ascertain numbers. Where feasible, egg bands should be removed but this may prove difficult because usually the pest lays its eggs on the larger trees. Insecticides applied thoroughly to infested trees while the caterpillars are still small, i.e., in mid-to late-May, provide good kill and keep the amount of damage and annoyance to a minimum. A number of insecticides are registered for use against tent caterpillars with Sevin (carbaryl) or Malathion generally being readily available. If an insecticide is used, the manufacturer's directions for defoliators should be followed exactly.

*\*Malacosoma disstria*

April 8, 1974

Insect and Disease Survey Unit



