A SAWFLY ON COTTONWOOD IN THE FRASER VALLEY

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SUMMARY

Defoliation of mainly native black cottonwood by a cottonwood sawfly, <u>Nematus</u> <u>currani</u>, continued for the third consecutive year on islands and some foreshore areas near Chilliwack.

The area of defoliation increased to 730 ha from 685 ha recorded in 1992, and approximately 50 ha in 1991. There were 105 ha of light, 365 ha of moderate, and 260 ha of severe defoliation. This compares to 140 ha of light, 430 ha of moderate and 115 ha of severe defoliation recorded in 1992.

The defoliation occurred from the Herrling Island group east of Agassiz to Matsqui Island near Mission. Most of the defoliation was on Islands within TFL 43, managed by Scott Paper. Although most of the damage occurred in native black cottonwood, trace to light defoliation occurred in some hybrid poplars at Harrison Mills, as well as some moderate to severe defoliation in hybrids in the Mercer plantation on Herrling Island.

Some mass larval collections were made during a ground survey prior to aerial observations, these larvae are currently in rearing to determine if any parasitism or disease is present in the population.

DETECTION AND DAMAGE

As with other defoliated deciduous trees, a second flush will likely occur later this year. The impact of defoliation to date will probably be some radial growth loss, particularly in trees that have suffered repeated moderate to severe defoliation.

This ongoing infestation is the first known outbreak of this pest in British Columbia. Previous records and collections were from single or small groups of defoliated trees. The sawfly pupates in the duff following the larval stage and emerges early in the year to begin feeding soon after the foliage flushes. Larvae had completed feeding and began pupating by the third week of May this year.

The status and potential of this pest will continue to be monitored by Forest Insect and Disease Survey.

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