



PEST REPORT

Pacific and Yukon Region • Pacific Forestry Centre • 506 West Burnside Road • Victoria, B.C. • V8Z 1M5

FIDS Pest Report 93-9

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FOREST TENT CATERPILLAR IN THE PRINCE GEORGE FOREST REGION

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Forest tent caterpillar, *Malacosoma disstria*, defoliated mainly trembling aspen over approximately 40 000 ha, almost double the area attacked in 1992.

Tent caterpillar populations increased in the Prince George Forest District after two consecutive years of decrease, defoliating aspen over almost 22 000 ha from Prince George to Quesnel. Light defoliation was recorded over 4 400 ha, moderate over 9 300 ha and severe over 8 000 ha. The largest infestations and the majority of the area of attack was noted between the Prince George Airport and Stoner. Smaller scattered patches of defoliation were mapped north of Quesnel. An additional 2 700 ha of severe defoliation was noted along the southwest side of McLeod Lake.

Defoliation by the caterpillar was also noted in the Dawson Creek Forest District; 1992 was the first time in eight years that no defoliation had been recorded in this district. Several hundred hectares of severe defoliation were reported south of Taylor.

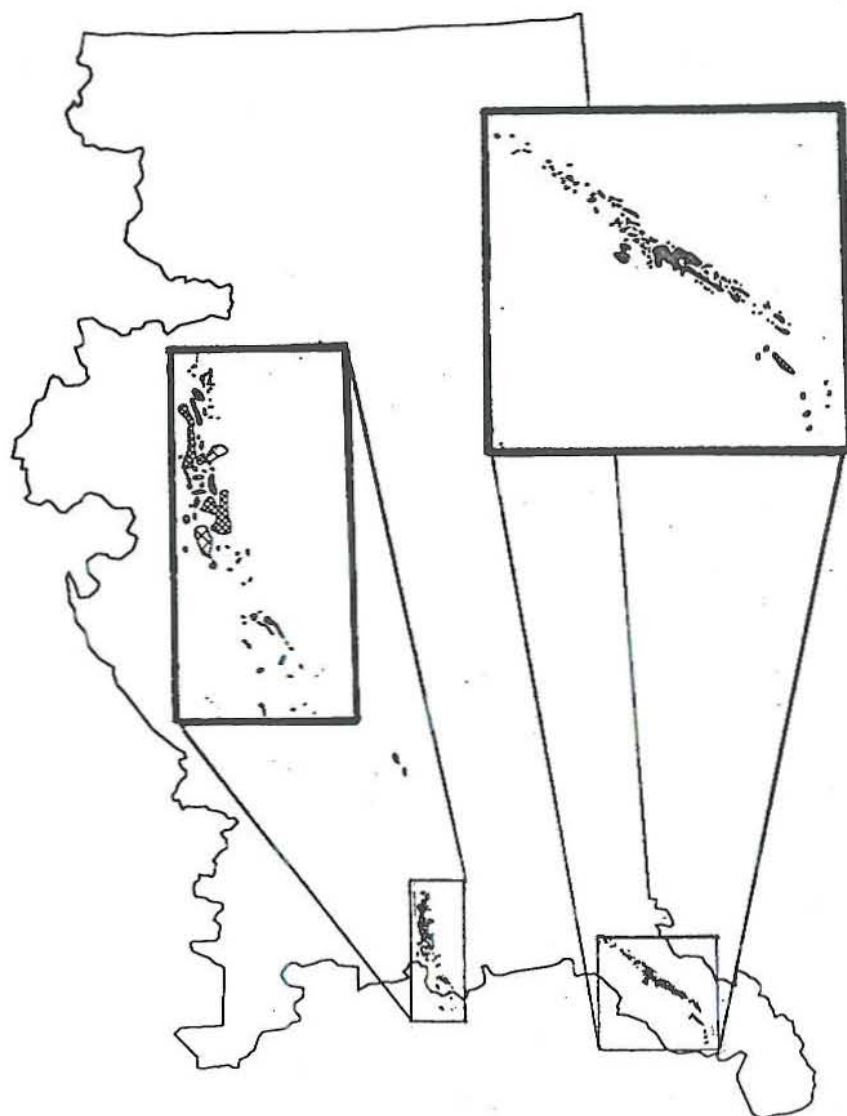
In the McBride Forest District the area of feeding increased for the third consecutive year to over 16 000 ha of moderate and severe defoliation. The largest areas of defoliation occurred in the Dunster and Croydon areas with over 9 000 ha of severe defoliation. Infestations were mapped further to the southeast this year, with scattered patches totaling 2 000 ha recorded from Tete Jaune Cache to south of Valemount. The remainder of the caterpillar feeding was noted around McBride and north to the Goat River. Feeding has finished for 1993, and moth flights have already started in several areas. Moths will continue to lay egg masses on mostly aspen trees for the next several weeks.

The population fluctuations in 1993 were mostly predicted by FIDS egg mass sampling in the fall of 1992. Increased populations and severe defoliation were predicted at five of eight sites sampled, including all four sites in the McBride Forest District. At sites where decreasing populations were forecast, no defoliation occurred.

Continued defoliation leads to branch dieback, top kill, growth loss and increased susceptibility to attacks by other insects and diseases. As well as damaging trees, forest tent caterpillars can be a nuisance to homeowners, campers, and picnickers because of its tendency to migrate in large numbers during larval stage.

FIDS will continue to monitor forest tent caterpillar populations this fall, including egg mass sampling, which will predict populations for 1994.

PRINCE GEORGE FOREST TENT CATERPILLAR 1993



FORESTRY CANADA
Forest Insect and Disease Survey

STATISTICS:

	Ha:	Freq:
Light:	4443	23
Moderate:	11449	27
Severe:	21504	120
Total:	37396	170