

Northeast Wisconsin Forest Pest Update

May 15, 2009

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Insects:

Eastern Tent Caterpillar
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Diseases:

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Slime Mold
White Pine Blister Rust

Other:

Sending Insect Samples to me

Insects

Eastern Tent Caterpillar - small webs created by Eastern Tent Caterpillar are appearing on wild cherry trees (right with pen for size comparison). The caterpillars, which began to hatch at the end of April, are capable of completely defoliating the tree that their web nest is located in. They feed outside the web nest and return to the nest to rest. Cherry is a favored species and you'll often see Eastern Tent Caterpillar webs in small cherries along roadsides during the spring. Cherry generally handles this defoliation well, sending out a second set of leaves later in the season.



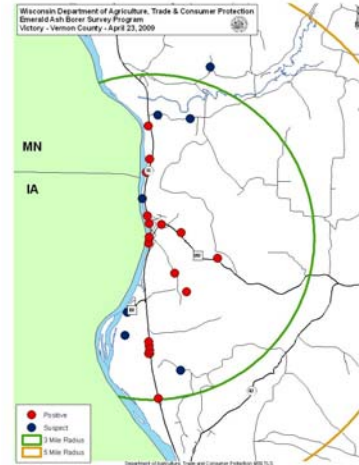
Bill McNee reports that lots of calls are coming in to him with people mistaking this caterpillar for gypsy moth. Although gypsy moth eggmasses are hatching right now, they do not create webs like Eastern Tent Caterpillar does.

EAB Awareness Week – will be May 17-23. There will be a Governor's Proclamation and media campaign in addition to the 'Burn it where you buy it' yard signs being seen around the state.

Emerald Ash Borer in Vernon County – during DATCP’s Rapid Visual Assessment in the Victory area EAB larvae were



found in trees 3 miles to the south of Victory and 2 miles north of Victory. Positive samples (red dots on map at right) were also found 1.5 miles east of town and crews found suspect trees (blue dots) near the northern and southern edges of the 5 mile radius (green line). Following APHIS recommendations purple traps will be hung in a 10 mile radius of Victory with 9 traps placed in each 1.5 square miles within that 10 mile radius.



EAB in St. Paul, Minnesota – Across the border from the Victory, WI infestation the county of Houston, Minnesota, has been placed under quarantine although no positive trees have been found yet. Unfortunately, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture announced on Thursday (May 14) the discovery of an EAB infestation in St. Paul. The infestation was initially reported by a tree care company and USDA has made a preliminary confirmation of EAB. Three trees are known to be infested and the MN Dept. of Ag. will begin a more comprehensive survey soon to determine the extent of the infestation. A quarantine is expected to be enacted for Ramsey and Hennepin Counties.

EAB Trapping in WI – from Bill Mcnee. The state's emerald ash borer trapping project is underway, with approximately 7,500 baited, purple panel traps (right) being deployed statewide. Hundreds of traps will be used to help determine the size of the two known Wisconsin infestations near Newburg and Victory.



Gypsy Moth – from Bill McNee. Gypsy moth hatch (below) is well underway in NER. As of May 14, hatch is starting in the north while second instars are already present in Oshkosh and parts of southern Wisconsin. The DNR Gypsy Moth Suppression Program is expecting to start spraying during the week of May 18. At present, most of NER is likely to be sprayed just before or just after the Memorial Day weekend. Spraying is unlikely to occur over the long weekend. Maps of the treatment areas are available at www.gypsymoth.wi.gov. To find out which areas are scheduled for treatment the following day, sign up for daily email notification at www.gypsymoth.wi.gov or call 1-800-



642-MOTH for a daily message.

Now is a good time to put up sticky bands (right) on your susceptible trees if you haven't already done so. These will keep crawling caterpillars from getting into the tree. At a convenient height, wrap a belt of duct tape 4-6 inches wide around each tree trunk, shiny side out. Smear the center of the band with a sticky,



horticultural pest barrier available at garden centers. Don't use motor oil or axle grease because these can harm the tree.

In early June, prepare burlap bands to collect larger caterpillars. Cut a piece of burlap 12" to 18" wide and long enough to wrap completely around the tree at chest height. Tie a piece of string around the middle of the burlap and fold the upper portion down to form a "skirt" around the tree (right). Every afternoon, check under the burlap and either cut the caterpillars in half or brush them into a bucket of soapy water to kill them. Remove the sticky bands and burlap bands later in summer once the caterpillars are gone.



When very large numbers of egg masses and/or caterpillars are present, homeowners may choose to spray their trees with an insecticide. These treatments are most effective when done in May and early June while the caterpillars are small. Be sure to follow the instructions found on the insecticide container. Homeowners interested in arranging for insecticide treatments should contact an arborist or tree service as soon as possible. The Wisconsin Arborist Association has a list of certified arborists available at www.waa-isa.org. Also look in the phone book under 'Tree Service' because some businesses offering tree spraying are not listed on the WAA web site.

Jackpot! – after a site visit to Waupaca County where I spent about 1 ½ hours in a stand I hit the jackpot and found 16 deer ticks (right) on myself. I'm sure some of you foresters can top that number but it was a personal best for me.



Leafcutting Bee – the photos at right and below show a strange "leaf tube" that a logger found in a tree. These special tubes, created from leaves that are glued together, are homes for the larvae of Leafcutting Bees. These are solitary bees that line a small cavity with leaves and lay several eggs, each in their own little chamber, within the leaf tube. They usually use tunnels that



Photo by Ryan Brown



Photo by Ryan Brown

something else has already created. The larvae eat pollen pellets that the adults create and place in the nest with the egg. These bees rarely sting and are great pollinators, so these are the good guys.

Winter Cutworm – I reported on winter cutworm in the March pest update and reports continue to come in. Large numbers of these caterpillars were observed while the snow was still on the ground and large numbers continue to be reported in some areas. These non-native insects spend the winter as an active caterpillar ready to start feeding as soon as plants start growing in the spring. Winter cutworm prefers herbaceous plants like alfalfa, winter wheat, garden plants, lawns, grasses, clover, and others. The most recent report of large numbers of caterpillars was from northern Marinette County but other counties in the northeast region that have reported winter cutworm include: Brown, Calumet, Door, Manitowoc, Oconto, Outagamie, and Waushara.



Diseases

Annosum found in Waupaca County – the root rot disease Annosum has been found in southwestern Waupaca County in a red pine plantation. The stand had been thinned twice and had several pockets of mortality. The last pocket that I examined had 4 trees that had probably died last year and I found fruiting structures at the base of the trees as well as a nearby stump. Annosum can be difficult to find at any time of the year but this time of year can be particularly difficult because the fruiting structures are darker black/brown on top which blends with the litter layer, and the underside is often a tan color which doesn't stand out as nicely as the bright white color that you'll find in the fall. A comparison of spring and fall fruiting is shown at right.

It's important to identify if a pocket in a pine stand is caused by Annosum because the management recommendations for the stand will be slightly different than if the pocket of dead trees was identified to be Red Pine Pocket Mortality or mortality due to bark beetles.

Preventative stump treatments used during conifer harvests will prevent the fungus from infecting new stumps but will not "cure" any infections that are already in the stand. It's important to prevent new infections since we don't know of any way to eliminate Annosum from a stand once you have it.



Fruiting on stump in the spring



Fruiting on stump in fall

Slime mold – several reports have recently come in of bright orange slime molds being noticed in trees. Both Brown and Oconto Counties had several reports. Slime molds are usually a nice bright color (pink, orangish, or yellow), and are not a true fungus although they do produce spores. They are a slimy mass of protoplasm that is capable of moving as they ooze over things that they hope are edible. They consume/digest dead organic material and bacteria, yum, but they don't do damage to live trees so no control is necessary. The photo at right shows a pretty orange slime mold on a tree.



White pine blister rust – blister rust cankers will be fruiting soon, producing orange pustules along the margins of the canker. This disease is specific to white pine trees but the disease cannot be transmitted directly from one tree to another. The spores that are produced on the tree will infect Ribes (gooseberry) plants which will produce spores later in the summer, those spores from the Ribes plants will then be able to infect a white pine tree. Blister rust causes a canker on white pine which can girdle the branches and the main stem, and can kill the tree.



The photos here show a canker at the base of a tree. The left photo shows the sunken area with pitch flow, which is characteristic of white pine blister rust, and the right photo shows the base of tree after I peeled the bark off and you can see the staining under the bark indicating the necrotic areas. Although this tree was still green it was off-color and on its way to being dead.

Other/Misc.

Sending insects samples to me – if you are planning to send an insect sample to me please be sure to use a container that cannot be crushed. Remember that envelopes go through rollers in the mail, which flattens an insect quite well. Sometimes the rollers simply squish the innards out of the bug as it did for the Flatheaded Appletree borer larvae sent to me in a plastic bag in an envelope, and arrive paper-thin but identifiable (right). But sometimes the rollers completely destroy the insect and I'm



Flatheaded Appletree Borer

unable to identify the blob of bug ooze it when it arrives. A box or plastic medicine bottle usually won't get crushed in the mail so please put the insects that you send me into a box or other container. Thanks!

Report EAB:

by phone 1-800-462-2803

by email DATCPEmeraldAshBorer@wisconsin.gov

visit the website <http://emeraldashborer.wi.gov/>

Report Gypsy Moth:

by phone at 1-800-642-6684

by email dnrfgypsymoth@wisconsin.gov

visit the website <http://www.gypsymoth.wi.gov/>

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Note: This pest update covers forest health issues occurring in Northeastern Wisconsin. This informal newsletter is created to provide up-to-date information to foresters, landowners, and others on forest health issues. If you have insect or disease issues to report in areas other than northeastern Wisconsin please report them to your local extension agent, state entomologist or pathologist, or area forest pest specialist.

Pesticide use: Pesticide recommendations contained in this newsletter are provided only as a guide. You, the applicator, are responsible for using pesticides according to the manufacturer's current label directions. Read and follow label directions and be aware of any state or local laws regarding pesticide use.