

Are Winter Moths Flying Round Your Property?

In Wellesley and throughout eastern Massachusetts the winter moth caterpillar has been defoliating trees during the spring. Adult moths will emerge in late November and December to mate and females will be laying their eggs in tree bark crevices or other protected areas of a tree. These eggs will hatch in the spring producing small green caterpillars that will be defoliating trees. If you observe these moths active on your property and have had damage to your trees last spring we recommend that you consult with an arborist and develop an overall treatment plan to protect your trees. Effective organic plans are available. To find an arborist go on-line to www.certifiedtreeandlawn.org or call the Massachusetts Arborist Association at # 508-653-3320. For more information about the winter moth and other landscape pests, go to www.umassgreeninfo.org for pictures, fact sheets and updates. For information about the Wellesley Integrated Pest Management Policy, go to www.wellesleyma.gov/nrc.

We hope that with proper state government support the University of Massachusetts Extension Service will be able to keep working on its program to introduce a natural predatory fly to control this pest. The success of this biological control program will work naturally to minimize the need for future spraying of this invasive and destructive pest that is damaging private and public shade trees in Massachusetts.

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