



Maryland Department of Agriculture

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Office of Plant Industries and Pest Management

Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
Earl F. Hance, Secretary
Mary Ellen Setting, Deputy Secretary

The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Internet: www.mda.state.md.us

410.841.5700 Baltimore/Washington
301.261.8106 Washington, D.C.
410.841.5914 Fax
800.492.5590 Toll Free

GYPSY MOTH EGG MASS SURVEY REPORT MONTGOMERY COUNTY Fall 2011

Introduction

Since 1982, the U.S. Forest Service, the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) and individual county governments have joined to conduct an integrated pest management (IPM) program to suppress injurious gypsy moth populations on priority forest and shade trees at selected sites on private and public land (see enclosed treatment site selection criteria). **The MDA supervised Cooperative Gypsy Moth Suppression Program requires that extensive amounts of accurate pest population data be collected annually.** The primary method of data collection is through annual egg mass surveys conducted in the fall at established permanent points. The purpose of these surveys is to determine gypsy moth population densities and trends, to evaluate treatment areas, if any, and to assess the potential for defoliation and the need for treatment in the coming year.

MDA Forest Pest Management (FPM) staff has been conducting gypsy moth egg mass surveys in Montgomery County on a countywide basis since the early 1980s. We frequently review and update our survey areas to include newly developed woodlands with a high percentage of susceptible tree species, especially oak.

Results from this year

Between July 2011 and January 2012, FPM staff conducted 656 gypsy moth egg mass surveys in 191 separate areas (574 on private and local acres and 82 on MD DNR acres). A total of 22,213 acres was directly assessed by our surveys. There were no areas found with populations averaging above 250 egg masses per acre, the same as in the fall of 2010. Survey results indicate that gypsy moth populations which collapsed in Montgomery County in the spring of 2009 have not rebounded. New egg masses were found at 1.5 % of the survey sites compared with 8.1 % last year. As with last year there is little risk for defoliation at the sites surveyed. A map showing the location of survey areas with population levels color-coded is enclosed.

Discussion

Due to extremely wet conditions in the spring of 2009 an epizootic of the gypsy moth fungus *Entomophaga maimaiga* occurred throughout Montgomery County. This epizootic also affected

active gypsy moth populations throughout the Mid-Atlantic States. A combination of the MDA suppression program and the fungus outbreak has brought the population to a non-destructive level. Populations have remained at this low level in 2011. Since the average populations in areas surveyed are well below the 250 egg masses per acre threshold no suppression activities are being proposed for Montgomery County for 2012.

Although the gypsy moth populations are very low this insect has the potential for fast population rebounds. It only takes a season or two of favorable conditions for potentially defoliating levels to return, so it is important to monitor the population on a yearly basis in order to recognize changes and make timely and appropriate recommendations to land owners and managers. During the last fungus epizootic it only took two years to begin finding population levels that required treatment. Although unlikely, if favorable conditions exist this spring, there is a chance that some areas in Montgomery County may need treatment in 2013.

Gypsy moth populations in Garrett Co. which collapsed in 2008 have begun to rebound and approximately 2,700 acres are under proposal for treatment the spring of 2012.

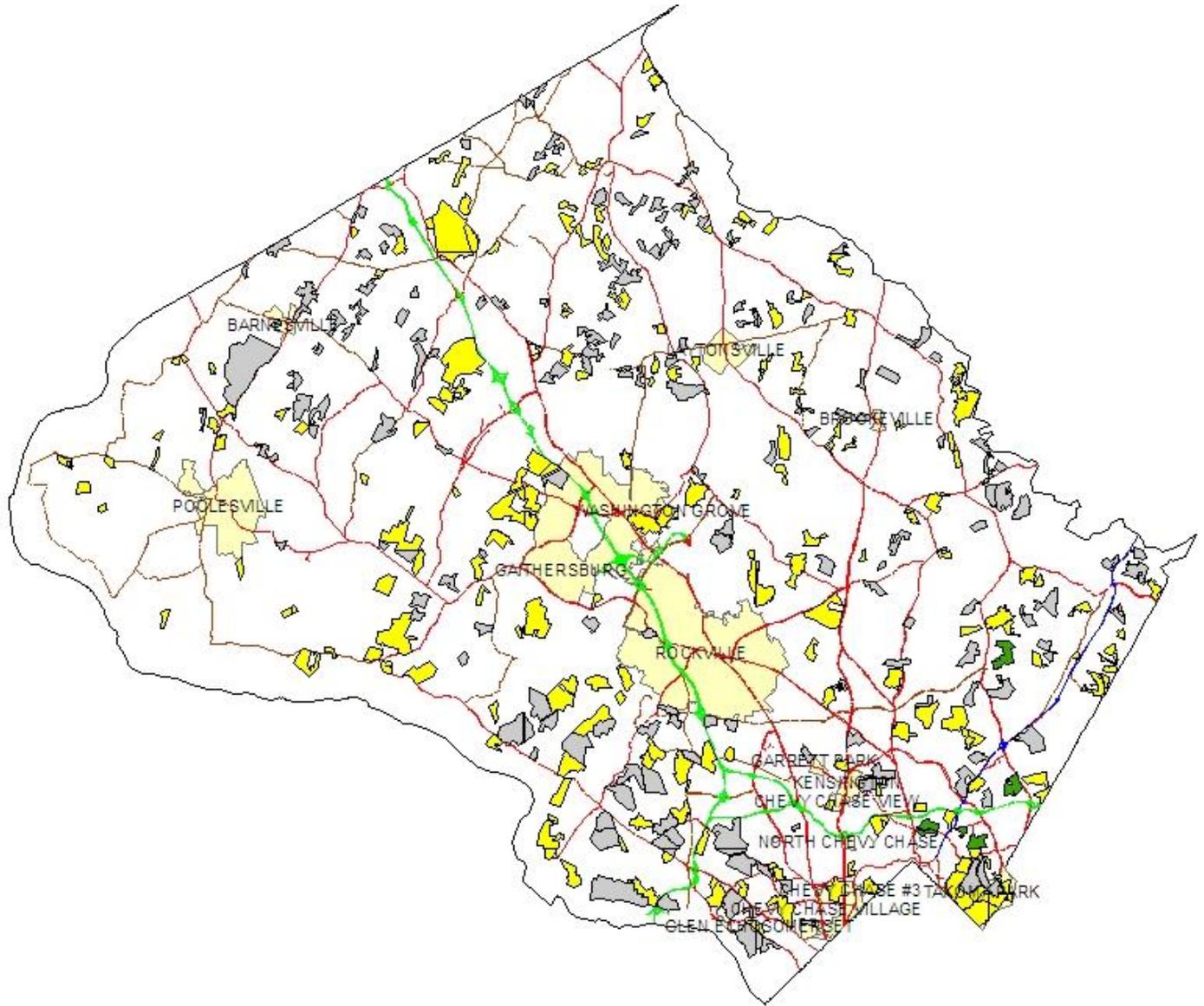
Summary

The Maryland Department of Agriculture has been monitoring gypsy moth populations in Montgomery County regularly since the early 1980s by conducting egg mass surveys on a yearly basis. Surveys performed in the fall of 2011 indicate that populations have not rebounded since an area wide population collapse in the spring of 2009. MDA is not proposing any treatment for gypsy moth in Montgomery County in 2012. Continued population assessments are important to find potential problems early before they cause significant damage and are easier to control.

If you have any questions, comments or reports regarding gypsy moth or other forest pests, please do not hesitate to contact us. Or, you may visit our website at http://www.mda.state.md.us/plants-pests/forest_pest_mgmt/index.php.

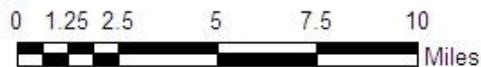
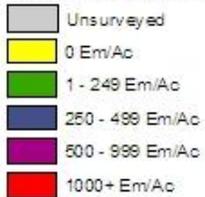
Submitted
Tom Lupp
Regional Entomologist
Central Region
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FALL 2011 EGG MASS SURVEY RESULTS MONTGOMERY COUNTY



Legend

Average Egg Masses per Acre



Major Roads

