

EASTERN TENT CATERPILLAR



Identification

The fully grown eastern tent caterpillars are about two inches long, black with solid white stripes down the middle of the back and a row of pale blue oval spots on each side. They are sparsely covered with fine light brown hairs.

Hosts

Feeding occurs primarily on ornamental cherries, wild cherries and crab apples.

Biology

Caterpillars hatch from eggs in the early spring, about the time tree buds begin to open. Soon caterpillars begin to spin silken tents at the bases of tree branches. There is one generation per year.

Control

Leaf-feeding by caterpillars can be prevented by destroying tents with a stick or pole or by pruning egg masses from twigs before early hatch.