

entomophaga maimaiga

WID's gypsy moth control consultant Dr. Mark Ticehurst reports a dramatic increase in gypsy moth populations:

Gypsy moth infestations continue to cause damage throughout in the east and midwest. The gypsy moth infestation expanded significantly in Lake Barcroft. Egg mass density increased from 4.8/acre in 2000 to 42.8/acre which will hatch in 2001. Density of larvae under burlap bands increased from an average of 1.4 which were observed last year to 11.0 this year.

The obvious solution is aerial spraying of Bt. An innovative alternative is a modest application of Gypsy Moth Fungus. Instead of an elaborate and expensive helicopter spraying of the entire community, this pathogen is applied in small quantities of topsoil placed at the base of hot-spot trees.

The benefits of applying *Entomophaga maimaiga* are several. It costs half as much. The process is cumulative and conceivably can result in permanent immunization. It is natural. It is strictly gypsy moth specific whereas Bt does also kill beneficial butterfly and other moths.

Ticehurst's *National Gypsy Moth Management Group* has produced and used the fungus for the last three years very successfully in critical gypsy moth infestation areas in Pennsylvania and Michigan.

A preponderance of application areas succeeded dramatically but a few spots failed, necessitating a re-application the following year.

The Lake Barcroft program will be virtually unnoticed. Trowels-full or small shovels-full of topsoil will be spread at the base of certain trees, particularly the 100 gypsy moth monitoring sites throughout the community. WID staff will augment the process using WID's Bt ground spray unit which is capable to reaching up 30 to 40 feet in the air.



What You can Do

If you noticed gypsy moth caterpillars last spring, it is possible that your property is one of Barcroft's new hot-spots. Send WID a note, authorizing WID to ground spray your trees if necessary. WID will not do this without your specific permission. Stipulate whether or not this includes your side yards and back yard. This process is strictly **time critical**. It takes place in the spring during a specific larval in-star stage. Last minute calls won't work.

If you want more information, WID will send you a three-page technical description of the gypsy moth fungus. If you authorize ground spraying on

your property and/or you want to receive the fungus description, please send a note to **WID, 3650 Boat Dock Drive, Falls Church, VA 22041**. No phone calls they might get garbled or lost.

A little action now can reduce nuisance and save trees.
