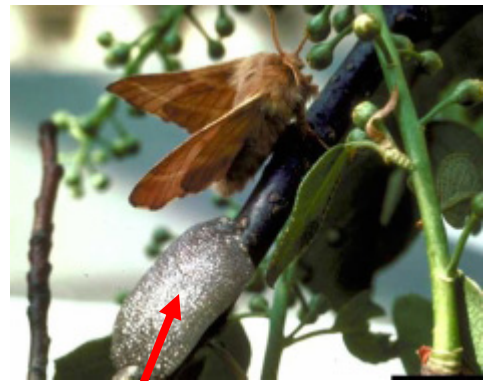




larva

Virginia Tech Univ.



egg ring

Univ. of Georgia



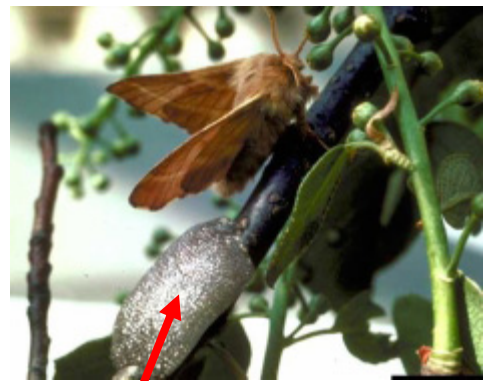
cocoon

Univ. of Georgia



larva

Virginia Tech Univ.



egg ring

Univ. of Georgia



cocoon

Univ. of Georgia

## forest tent caterpillar

*Malacosoma disstria* Hbn.

Outbreaks occur periodically on oaks, tupelo gum, and other hardwoods over wide areas of the eastern half of North America. Growth loss and dieback occur, but trees are seldom killed unless they sustain 3 or more successive years of complete defoliation.

The larvae have pale bluish lines along the sides of a brownish body, and a row of keyhole-shaped white spots down the middle of the back. They are sparsely covered with whitish hairs, and reach 2 inches (50 mm) at maturity. Adult moths are buff-brown, with darker oblique bands on the wings. Egg masses of 100 to 350 eggs encircle the twigs and are covered with frothy, dark brown cement.

The first noticeable signs of attack are sparse crowns and falling frass. Caterpillars often cluster on the lower trunks of infested trees. Single trees or complete stands may be completely defoliated during the spring.

Eggs hatch in early spring. Caterpillars feed for 4 to 6 weeks on the opening buds, foliage, and flowers. Despite its name, this species does not form tents. Pupation occurs in yellowish cocoons and lasts 10 to 14 days. Moths emerge from late May to July, mate, and deposit their eggs. There is one generation per year.

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