



*Early Lymantria dispar (gypsy moth) Control in MA*

The gypsy moth, *Lymantria dispar*, has been a costly and persistent problem in Massachusetts since its introduction in 1869. This invasive pest causes tree defoliation through its spring feeding in the caterpillar life stage. The first major defoliation event in Massachusetts occurred in 1889. It is at this point Massachusetts state agencies became involved and began efforts to control this pest. *Lymantria dispar* management began as a labor intensive process, including removing egg mass and applying treatments by hand. As technology advanced, the use of spray trucks and eventually aerial pesticide applications (including the use of DDT) were used. Despite continued efforts of control, they spread to every city and town in Massachusetts by 1922 and has remained a major threat to forest health in the state.