

DISTINGUISH BETWEEN EASTERN TENT AND GYPSY MOTH CATERPILLARS

EASTERN TENT CATERPILLAR

NOT a cranberry pest, does not eat cranberry, and generally not found on the bog



Figure 1. Eastern tent caterpillars are clearly identified by the white stripe running down the back and the presence of white silken tents in trees in early spring. The caterpillars are hairy with areas of blue, white, black, and orange.

The **eastern tent caterpillar** (*Malacosoma americanum*) is not a cranberry pest. It is an early spring species in the family of snout moths. It produces one generation per year. The caterpillars are social and live in a group within a conspicuous white silken tent found in crotches of trees. It is sometimes confused with the gypsy moth and fall webworm. Females lay eggs almost exclusively on trees in the plant family Rosaceae, particularly cherry (*Prunus*) and apple (*Malus*). Sometimes full-grown caterpillars may wander onto bogs when searching for pupation (cocoon, metamorphosing stage) sites.

GYPSY MOTH

The gypsy moth is a classic cranberry pest that will eat your buds and destroy vines.

The threshold is an average of 4.5 caterpillars/25 sweeps.

Avaunt (FIFRA 2EE recommendation) and Delegate are best choices.



Figure 2. Small gypsy moth caterpillars are hairy and totally black. As they mature, they are covered with long hairs and have prominent red and blue bumps down the length of the body.

The **gypsy moth** (*Lymantria dispar*) caterpillar is often picked up in early spring sweeps. Eggs are laid in masses with a yellowish-tan covering. A bog may become infested when overwintering eggs hatch on the bog or when tiny caterpillars disperse from surrounding trees by letting out a silken thread that is picked up by the wind; thus, gypsy moth caterpillars may be more common on the bog edges facing hardwood trees.

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