UT Extension
SP 290-Y
(Available online only)

Insects

Greenstriped Mapleworm

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The greenstriped mapleworm *Dryocampa rubicunda* (F.) is found throughout most of the eastern United States. This insect pest prefers maples; however, it has been reported feeding on various oaks and boxelder.

Damage

Greenstriped mapleworm larvae (caterpillars) feed on leaves, consuming most of the leaf tissue. Their populations may become large, causing severe defoliation.

Description and Life Cycle

The insect overwinters as a pupa in the soil. Moths emerge from May through July. Moths have woolly bodies and a wingspan of 1 ¾ to 2 ½ inches. The forewing is rose-pink on the inner and outer borders with a yellow band between. Hind-wings may be pure yellow or yellow with pink streaks throughout. After mating, female moths lay pale green eggs in masses on the undersides of the leaves. The eggs hatch in approximately 10 days.

Greenstriped mapleworm larva
Gerald J. Lenhard, www.forestryimages.org

Larvae are 1 ½ inches long when full grown, having cherry-red heads and pale yellow-green bodies. Eight light and seven dark green stripes alternately run the entire length of the body. Two prominent, slender, hornlike projections are located on the top of the second segment behind the head. There are two rows

Greenstriped mapleworm moth
Lacy L. Hyche, Auburn University, www.forestryimages.org

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of short spines on both sides of the body. Larvae feed in groups on the undersides of leaves when young. As they mature, they feed singly on the foliage. Larvae become full-grown in about a month. They then crawl to the ground where pupation takes place. Two generations a year commonly occur in Tennessee.

Control

Greenstriped mapleworms have been shown to be parasitized by several species of insects, but not in great abundance. Chemical control may be necessary when large populations are present during the period from May until August. For chemical control recommendations refer to:

https://tiny.utk.edu/ag/insectandmite.

Always refer to the insecticide label to make sure that the insecticide can be legally applied on ornamental plants at your site, such as residential landscape or commercial nursery.

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