

Species commonly confused with oak processionary moth (OPM) (Thaumetopoea processionea)

Oak processionary moth (Thaumetopoea processionea)

Almost exclusively on oak. Can be found on other broadleaves during very heavy outbreaks only.

April - June

Lackey moth (Malacosoma neustria)

A wide range of broadleaf trees & shrubs including oak.

April - June



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Up to 45mm. Grey body and dark head- older caterpillars have a central dark stripe with OPM by their distinct white line either side. Clumps orange and blue of long white hairs arise from orange warts along the length of the caterpillar.



Up to 55mm. Distinguishable from longitudinal stripes.





White silken nests on trunks or branches. Nests darken with age and accumulation of shed skins and hairs; tennis ball sized or much larger.



The caterpillars feed gregariously in a communal web or 'tent' typically formed between twigs. These are conspicuous and may exceed 30cm in length. Defoliation is often severe.

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Brown-tail moth

(Euproctis chrysorrhoea)

A wide range of

hedgerow trees and in scrub, notably bramblecan utilise oak.

Over winter - May

Buff-tip moth (Phalera bucephala)

A wide range of broadleaf trees and shrubs including oak.

July - October

Small Eggar moth (Eriogaster lanestris)

Blackthorn and hawthorn occasionally on other broadleaves but not on oak.

April - July

Up to 45mm. Dark brown and hairy with white marks down the side and two characteristic orangeyred warts at the rear.

Up to 80mm. Can resemble OPM because of abundant fine grey hairs but occur later in the season. Easily identified by their distinctly patterned yellow and black body.

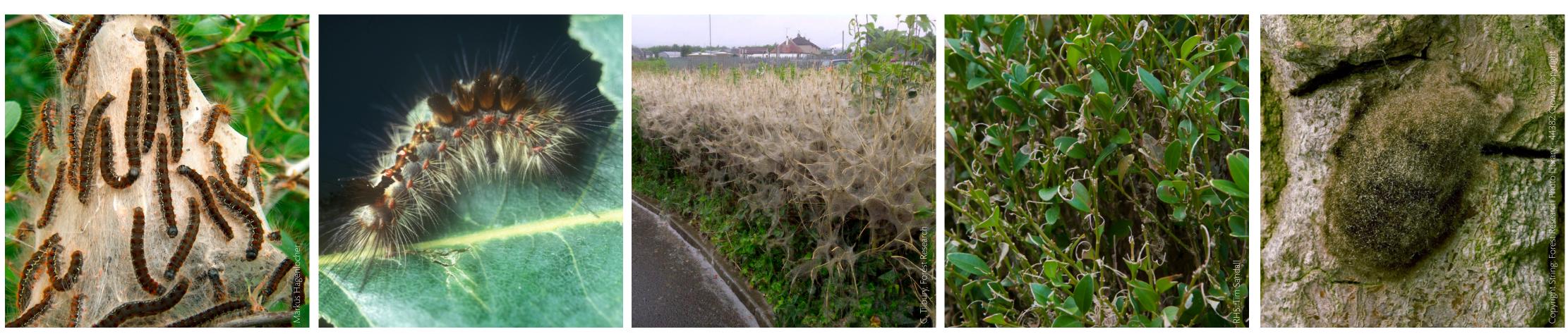
Up to 45mm. Velvetyblack body with redbrown marks bordered with white. Completely hairs; some quite long.



Caterpillars feed gregariously creating a strong silken web or 'tent'. Defoliation is often severe.



Buff-tip moth caterpillar do not produce webbing material. Caterpillars cause noticeable defoliation.



Caterpillars live and feed gregariously in silken webs. A rare species and localised across England as far as N. Yorkshire. Species is of conservation value.

Vapourer moth (Orgyia antiqua)

A wide range of

broadleaf trees and

shrubs including oak.

Small Ermine moths (Yponomeuta species)

Box tree caterpillar (Cydalima perspectalis)

A wide range of broadleaf trees and shrubs but not on oak.

In Europe, box tree caterpillars have only been observed eating species of box:*

May - early September May - July



Up to 40mm. Bluish grey body with red spots and a row of four distinctive pale yellow covered with fine brown single brown tufts.



Up to 25mm. Eight very similar UK species. Caterpillars are hairless, creamy white to grey with black markings.



the dorsal side.

Caterpillars do not produce webbing material. Can cause noticeable defoliation and also damage to buds and flowers but infestations are rarely significant.

Caterpillars produce webbing in spring and early summer that can be extensive draping over entire trees and hedgerows- defoliation can be severe.

Box caterpillar

*Buxus microphylla, B. microphylla var. insularis, B. sempervirens and B. sinica.

gov.uk/guidance/managing-oak-processionary-moth-in-england



April - October

Up to 40mm. Mature caterpillars have a green body, and striking pattern of thick, black and thin white stripes along the length of the body, with large black dots outlined in white on

Spongy moth (Lymantria dispar)

A wide range of broadleaved trees and shrubs.

April - June

Up to 70mm. The mature caterpillar develops a series of distinctly coloured 'warty spots' along its back: five pairs of blue spots behind the head, and six pairs of red or black-ish spots to the rear.

defoliation. The pupae webbing spun among the leaves and twigs.

Egg plaques are typically a yellow-brown colour, are in a cocoon of white are 3-4cm long and look like a sponge. They are usually found on crevices of bark, but also on walls, fences or any sheltered, rough surface. Can cause severe defoliation.