


















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

	Oak processionary moth ( <i>Thaumetopoea processionea</i> )	Lackey moth ( <i>Malacosoma neustria</i> )	Brown-tail moth ( <i>Euproctis chryorrhoea</i> )	Buff-tip moth ( <i>Phalera bucephala</i> )	Small Eggar moth ( <i>Eriogaster lanestris</i> )	Vapourer moth ( <i>Orgyia antiqua</i> )	Small Ermine moths ( <i>Yponomeuta species</i> )	Box tree caterpillar ( <i>Cydalima perspectalis</i> )	Spongy moth ( <i>Lymantria dispar</i> )
<b>Hosts</b>	Almost exclusively on oak. Can be found on other broadleaves during very heavy outbreaks only.	A wide range of broadleaf trees & shrubs including oak.	A wide range of hedgerow trees and in scrub, notably bramble- can utilise oak.	A wide range of broadleaf trees and shrubs including oak.	Blackthorn and hawthorn occasionally on other broadleaves but not on oak.	A wide range of broadleaf trees and shrubs including oak.	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:*	A wide range of broadleaved trees and shrubs.
<b>Caterpillar</b>	<p><b>April - June</b></p>  <p><b>! Human health risk ! Irritating/toxic hairs</b></p> <p>Up to 45mm. Grey body and dark head- older caterpillars have a central dark stripe with white line either side. Clumps of long white hairs arise from orange warts along the length of the caterpillar.</p>	<p><b>April - June</b></p>  <p>Up to 55mm. Distinguishable from OPM by their distinct orange and blue longitudinal stripes.</p>	<p><b>Over winter - May</b></p>  <p><b>! Human health risk ! Irritating/toxic hairs</b></p> <p>Up to 45mm. Dark brown and hairy with white marks down the side and two characteristic orange-red warts at the rear.</p>	<p><b>July - October</b></p>  <p>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.</p>	<p><b>April - July</b></p>  <p>Up to 45mm. Velvety-black body with red-brown marks bordered with white. Completely covered with fine brown hairs; some quite long.</p>	<p><b>May - early September</b></p>  <p>Up to 40mm. Bluish grey body with red spots and a row of four distinctive pale yellow single brown tufts.</p>	<p><b>May - July</b></p>  <p>Up to 25mm. Eight very similar UK species. Caterpillars are hairless, creamy white to grey with black markings.</p>	<p><b>April - October</b></p>  <p>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 the dorsal side.</p>	<p><b>April - June</b></p>  <p>Up to 70mm. The mature caterpillar develops a series of distinctly coloured 'wart' spots' along its back: five pairs of blue spots behind the head, and six pairs of red or black-ish spots to the rear.</p>
<b>Nests/ webbing</b>	 <p>White silken nests on trunks or branches. Nests darken with age and accumulation of shed skins and hairs; tennis ball sized or much larger.</p>	 <p>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.</p>	 <p>Caterpillars feed gregariously creating a strong silken web or 'tent'. Defoliation is often severe.</p>	 <p>Buff-tip moth caterpillars do not produce webbing material. Caterpillars cause noticeable defoliation.</p>	 <p>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.</p>	 <p>Caterpillars do not produce webbing material. Can cause noticeable defoliation and also damage to buds and flowers but infestations are rarely significant.</p>	 <p>Caterpillars produce webbing in spring and early summer that can be extensive draping over entire trees and hedgerows- defoliation can be severe.</p>	 <p>Box caterpillar defoliation. The pupae are in a cocoon of white webbing spun among the leaves and twigs. *<i>Buxus microphylla</i>, <i>B. microphylla</i> var. <i>insularis</i>, <i>B. sempervirens</i> and <i>B. sinica</i>.</p>	 <p>Egg plaques are typically a yellow-brown colour, 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.</p>