

Managing Browntail Moth in Tall Trees in Maine



If you have browntail moth populations in tall trees and are considering managing them, then ask yourself these questions:

1. Is the tree in a location where the hairs from the caterpillars will impact human health?
 - o **Yes: continue to 2/** No: consider no management
2. Is the tree in good condition?
 - o **Yes: continue to 3/** No: consider hiring a professional (see 4 and 5), or if extremely poor, tree removal (this may require help from a [licensed arborist](#)).
3. Does the tree make a positive contribution to the landscape?
 - o **Yes: continue to 4/** No: consider removal, replacement
4. Can you remove webs or contract to have them removed during the dormant season (Fall through early Spring)?
 - o Yes: use this approach where practical/ **No: continue to 5**
5. Can you hire a licensed pesticide applicator to apply insecticides to manage the populations?
 - o Yes: use this approach where possible/ **No: continue to 6**

The Maine Department of Agriculture Conservation and Forestry recommends working with an experienced and reputable [licensed pesticide applicator](#) when managing browntail moth and other tree pests with insecticides.

6. There are limited insecticides that non-licensed individuals can readily apply to trees outside of the reach of a hose-end or small pressurized sprayer. Many on the market require specialized equipment, are only available to commercial applicators, are not labeled for the site of application, or are sold in quantities impractical for non-commercial use.

Tree health, tree and caterpillar developmental state, weather conditions, the timing of application, site conditions, and other factors may limit the efficacy and legality of use of these products. With any pesticide application, **read, understand, and follow** the pesticide label; it **is the law**. If your situation does not meet these conditions you should reconsider management or hire a professional.

Pesticides must have [current state registration](#) for legal use. It appears that the following two products currently on the market and registered in Maine are viable options for non-licensed individuals to consider, **others may have been missed in our review**:

| Product Name | Active Ingredient | Comments |
|--------------|-------------------|--|
| Dendrex | Acephate | Preview the label on the NPIRS site . Note that earlier versions of the label are also online. Be sure to follow the container label if you decide to use this product. The National Pesticide Information Center has a general fact sheet on acephate. |
| Vivid II | Abamectin | Preview the label on the NPIRS site . |

More resources:

- Browntail Moth Information Page www.maine.gov/dacf/knockoutbtm
- Maine Cooperative Extension, Pest management Office extension.umaine.edu/ipm/
- Maine Board of Pesticides Control www.thinkfirstspraylast.org,
- National Pesticide Information Center <http://www.npic.orst.edu/>
- Maine Arborist Program www.maine.gov/dacf/php/arborist
- National Pesticide Information Retrieval System npirspublic.ceris.purdue.edu/state/