



CITY OF
BANGOR

Browntail Moth

Identification, Prevention & Treatment

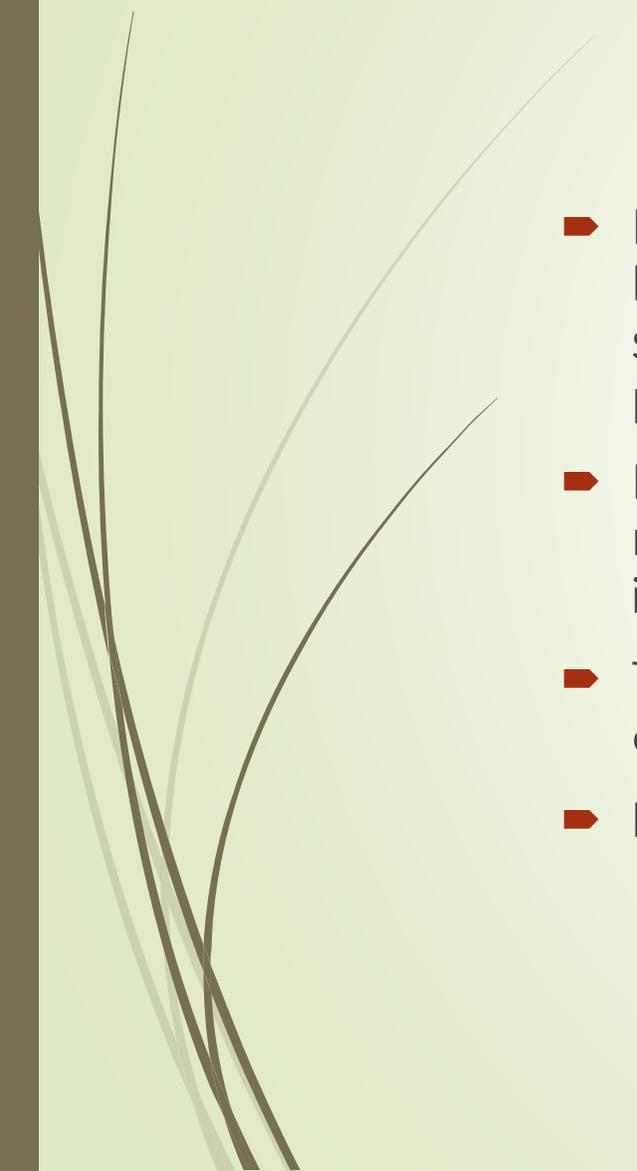
Identification



The Brown-tail Moth Caterpillar may reach 1.5 inches in length and are brown with broken white stripes on each side with two red/orange spots on the hind end. They can be found on a wide range of broadleaf trees and shrubs, but prefer oaks, apple, crabapple, pear, birch and cherry.



Browntail Moth Rash

- Browntail Caterpillars have tiny toxic hairs that readily break off of their bodies and can stay toxic in the environment for up to three years. In sensitive individuals, these hairs can cause skin irritation or rash similar to poison ivy and in some cases difficulty breathing.
 - Direct contact with the tiny toxic hairs can cause localized skin rash that may last a few hours to several days. The rash may be red, bumpy, and itchy.
 - The rash is not contagious, nor does it spread from one location to another or from person to person as long as the hairs have been removed.
 - In rare cases, the hairs can be inhaled and can cause respiratory problems.
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Browntail Moth Rash





Treatment

- ▶ Treatment is similar to that for any contact dermatitis.
- ▶ Wash exposed areas with a mild soap and cool or lukewarm water. Hot water will aggravate the rash.
- ▶ Take a cool oatmeal bath, such as AVEENO, to reduce symptoms.
- ▶ Take a non-sedating antihistamines (such as loratadine/ Claritin[®], fexofenadine/Allegra[®]) during the day.
- ▶ Take a sedating antihistamine (such as diphenhydramine/BENADRYL[®]) at night if needed.



Treatment



- ▶ If you are exposed to Browntail Moth hairs while at work and develop a rash, report it to your supervisor and complete a First Report of Injury Form.
- ▶ If the rash is minor in nature or limited to a small area of your body, you can request a Browntail Moth Rash Spray kit from Safety and Environmental Management. This kit contains all four over-the-counter ingredients of the spray and directions on how to properly mix and apply the compound.
- ▶ If rash is severe and/or covers large areas with swelling, redness and pain, file a First Report of Injury and go to Concentra if it is a work-related exposure. Prescription medication may be warranted for severe exposures.
- ▶ Visit your primary care provider if the exposure occurred outside of work.



Treatment – Browntail Moth Rash Spray

- ▶ Combine the following ingredients in a spray bottle and shake well. Apply twice a day to affected area. Refrigerate. Discard after 30 days.
 - ▶ 1 - 14 gm tube of hydrocortisone 1% cream (e.g. Cortizone-10).
 - ▶ $\frac{1}{2}$ - 28.3 gm tube of diphenhydramine hydrochloride 2% and zinc acetate 0.1% cream (e.g. Extra Strength BENADRYL[®]).
 - ▶ $\frac{1}{10}$ - 76.5 gm tube lidocaine 4% cream (e.g. Aspercreme[®])
 - ▶ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of witch hazel solution

Browntail Moth Life Cycle

A Year in the Life of Browntail Moth

Time of Year	Browntail Activity	Mitigation Measures
October through March	Caterpillars spend winter in webs	Clip and destroy webs; plan and line up treatments
April through June	Caterpillars feed, molt several times, wander late-May to June	Insecticide treatments should take effect before June to reduce impacts from hairs and to trees and shrubs
June	Caterpillars wander, pupate	Avoid contact with caterpillars and pupae. Both have irritating hairs
July through August	Moths fly, mate, lay eggs	Limit use of outdoor lights to avoid attracting moths from outside your area.
August through September	Eggs hatch, young caterpillars feed, build winter webs	Watch for feeding activity, clip webs once trees are dormant. For larger trees, it is not too early to line up management for next spring.

Most reports of human health impacts are from late-May through July. However, toxin in hairs is extremely stable (3+ yr); exposure is most likely in dry conditions. In infested areas use protective measures when conducting activities that might stir up the hairs.

April - June

- ▶ Caterpillars emerge from webs in late April through May and feed on foliage through late June.
- ▶ They molt or shed their skin several times during this period.



June - July



- Caterpillars start to wander, looking for a good place to build a cocoon.
- Will make cocoons in leaves, on branches, buildings, traffic control cabinets, equipment stored outside.
- Cocoons are full of toxic hairs!!!



July - August

- Moths emerge from cocoons in July.
- Lay eggs on the leaves of the host trees or shrubs.
 - 200 – 400 eggs
- Eggs will typically hatch in August.



August - September



- In late summer, the eggs will hatch and the larvae will start to feed then build a nest for the winter.
- Each winter's web can contain 25-400 caterpillars.



October - April





Prevention

- ▶ Take a minute before you start working to see if the Browntail Moth caterpillars are in the area.
- ▶ Avoid heavily infested areas between April and August, don't use leaf blowers, lawnmowers or string trimmers on dry days in these locations.
- ▶ If you have to work in an infested location, try to do so on a rainy day. The moisture will prevent the hairs from becoming airborne.
- ▶ Wear proper protective equipment to reduce exposure including:
 - ▶ Long sleeve shirt / pants
 - ▶ Neck Gator
 - ▶ Gloves
 - ▶ Dust mask
 - ▶ Hat
 - ▶ Disposable coveralls
- ▶ Using pre-contact wipes, such as Ivy X pre-contact wipes prior to starting the task. This product can help minimize hairs sticking into exposed skin.
- ▶ Use a lint roller on your clothes at the end of the day.



Questions?