

Pine Processionary Moth – *Thaumetopoea pityocampa*



Pine Processionary Moth (PPM), *Thaumetopoea pityocampa*, is not currently known to be in the UK. PPM has been extending its range across Europe, moving northwards through France since the 1990s.

Impact

To trees: In large numbers, PPM can defoliate trees, weakening them and making them more susceptible to other threats.

To people and animals: The caterpillars have thousands of hairs which contain an irritating substance called thaumetopoein. Contact with the hairs can result in painful skin irritation and rashes, allergic reactions, breathing difficulties and eye problems.

(Photo: John H. Ghent, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org)



Don't give
pests and
diseases
an easy ride



If you think you have spotted a case of this pest, then report it through the Forestry Commission's online Tree Alert form: [forestry.gov.uk/trealert](https://www.forestry.gov.uk/trealert)

Help to keep the UK free of this pest by ensuring pine trees for planting come from pest free areas.



Think kit

As with all pests which pose a health risk, treatment and management should only be undertaken by professionals who have the appropriate training and equipment to undertake the work safely.



Think transport

Infected pine trees or plants should not be transported out of affected areas. The risk of spread through the movement of plants is greater than natural means of spread.



Think trees

You must inform the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) if you're bringing pine trees into England and Wales from other EU member states. Pine from non EU countries is prohibited.

Symptoms Guide: Pine Processionary Moth



PPM nests

PPM caterpillars build white, silken nests during the winter and are usually found in the branches and foliage of infected trees.



Defoliation of needles

PPM caterpillars feed on the pine needles at night. Complete defoliation can occur if the level of infestation is high enough.

(Photo: William M. Ciesla, Forest Health Management International, Bugwood.org)

PPM caterpillars

Hairy, and orange-brown in colour with blue bands and a black head. Most likely to be seen in winter and early spring.



Caterpillars procession

The caterpillars move about in nose-to-tail processions on the ground in early spring before pupating in the soil.



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Adult PPMs have cream forewings with brown markings, and white hindwings, with a wingspan of 30-45 mm, and fly from May to July.



Discoloured nests

Overtime, the nests can become discoloured and damaged. They remain a health risk as the hairs of the caterpillars will still be present.

(Photo: Milan Zubrik, Forest Research Institute - Slovakia, Bugwood.org)

For more details, please visit www.forestry.gov.uk/pineprocessionarymoth