GYPSY MOTHS

by Stanley Rachesky Entomologist, University of Illinois

A variety of insects are causing problems at this time of the year.

Mimosa Webworms, an insect found on mimosa and honeylocust trees, are beginning to appear in numerous quantities around Chicagoland.

The adults are mousy gray moths with about 1/2" wing span. The small pale gray to brown larvae web the leaves together forming a nest in which they chew the leaves, leaving nothing but a leaf-like skeleton of veins. Leaf curl is a good symptom of this pest. The worms can be found rolled up on the damaged leaves. Sprays of sevin or malathion diluted to label directions will do an excellent job in control.

From Main to New Jersey the **Gypsy Moth** is quickly taking its toll of the forests this year. Luckily we in Illinois are not bothered with this great economic pest. At least not yet! However, there's a good chance that as the years roll by, the gypsy moth will come westward. Of all the leaf-feeding pests that attack shade and forest trees, the caterpillar of this moth is by far the most destructive. It feeds on almost all types of deciduous trees and as its development continues into later stages it will turn also on many species of evergreens.

The state of Michigan has had its problems with the gypsy moth in recent years. We hope it will be eradicated there.

Until recently DDT kept the pest in check. However, because of the restriction of DDT in many states populations of the gypsy moth has exploded. Last year alone approximately 1,000,000 acres of trees were denuded.

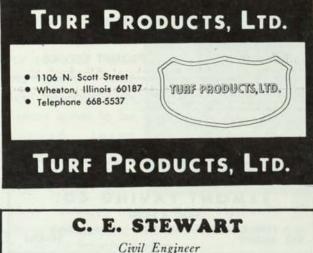
Different types of substitutes are being tried in an attempt to obtain control. However, in the meantime, the gypsy moth continues to thrive.

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