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# ugs & Diseases



August 2003

*info note*

## Aspen Appetite For Destruction

Despite what seemed to be a cool moist spring, aspen defoliation levels in the Northwest Region increased from the previous year. Once again the predominant damage agent responsible for the defoliation was the large aspen tortrix (*Choristoneura conflictana*). Large tracts of aspen were defoliated at varying levels of

intensity throughout the entire region. Defoliation was recorded from areas around Steen River north to areas around Snipe Lake in the south. Areas around Two Lakes in the west to areas around Chipewyan Lake in the east also were defoliated. The largest areas of defoliation were recorded in the northern section of the Peace and Lesser Slave Corporate Areas as well as the eastern half of the Upper Hay Corporate Area.



Mature large aspen tortrix larva.

Other defoliator species observed at notable levels were the aspen leaf roller (*Pseudexentera oregonana*) and the forest tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma disstria*). Aspen leaf roller larvae were observed in areas near the town of Peace River as well as along the Peace River near Dunvegan. Forest tent caterpillar larvae were observed in areas south of Grande Prairie on Highway 40 as well as along the Chinchaga River on Highway 58.

Final figures for the total defoliated area will be reported in the next issue. ■

*Mike Maximchuk*

## Mapping Solutions For Forest Health

Forest health has just implemented a new portal on the Land and Forest Division's Citrix application server that allows all internal employees to view forest health data using ArcExplorer. This tool allows staff to view forest health data overlaid on base data, and perform many other simple GIS functions.

Log on to the Forest Health internal website at [http://www.env.gov.ab.ca/internal\\_srd/lfid/FH\\_internal/](http://www.env.gov.ab.ca/internal_srd/lfid/FH_internal/) and click on "Conditions and Maps". ■

*Cody Crocker*

## Assessing the Impacts Of a Spruce Budworm Outbreak

Land and Forest Division, Tolko-Industries High Level and the Canadian Forest Service are teaming up to build a network of

permanent sapling plots that will be used to get a better understanding of spruce budworm impacts in northern Alberta forests. The network will be built from both existing participant plots and some newly established plots in key budworm areas. The goal is to have approximately 75 plots within various areas of the current and past known outbreaks as well as within areas sustaining variable levels of consecutive years of defoliation. The network of plots will be assessed annually by air for defoliation levels and general stand conditions, and every fifth year by ground for



Forest Health Officer Mike Maximchuk examining spruce budworm-defoliated branch.

individual tree vigor and growth and yield measurements.

The information will be used within the Spruce Budworm Decision Support System to further assist forest managers with their decisions regarding spruce budworm management. ■

*Mike Maximchuk*

## Upcoming Meeting Announcements

### Mountain Pine Beetle Symposium: “Challenges and Solutions”

Kelowna, BC - October 30-31, 2003

It is timely to bring together forest practitioners and researchers to discuss the current mountain pine beetle problems and become familiar with the latest information that will assist in reducing losses. This 2003 symposium will present the best science of mountain pine beetle management from Canada and the United States. Don't miss this opportunity!! More information is available at <http://esbc.harbour.com/mpb.html>.

### Invasive Plants: “Understanding the Threat”

Calgary, AB - October 1-3, 2003

Hosted by :



Invasive plants have long been the scourge of agricultural lands, and are understood as such by concerned farmers and ranchers who manage them. The impact of these invader species is becoming alarmingly evident in our heavily pressured forested landscape. Consider this conference as a valuable tool to understand the scope and consequences of this invasive plant “explosion in slow motion”.

Visit the conference website for registration and detailed program information at <http://www.aaaf.ab.ca/invaders/>.

### 51st Annual Meeting of the Entomological Society of Alberta

Athabasca, AB - October 2-4, 2003



For more meeting information visit the website <http://www.biology.ualberta.ca/courses.hp/esa/esa.htm> ■

## **B**ugs & Diseases

Vol. 14 No. 2

ISSN No. 1499-5859 (print version)

ISSN No. 1499-5867 (online version)

*info note*

Published Apr., Aug., and Dec.  
by the Forest Health Section,  
Forest Management Branch,  
Land and Forest Division (LFD)  
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Bugs & Diseases informs LFD, Industry and other forestry-related personnel about current forest health issues. Articles and ideas are welcome! Submission deadline is the 15th of the month before publication.

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# Yellowheaded Spruce Sawfly

*Pikonema alaskensis*,  
Voracious feeder on young spruce.  
Can't you help our poor trees chances,  
By calling just a little truce?

Each year you pupate in the duff,  
'neath the trees you'll re-attack.  
A year or two has been enough,  
Much more than this will cause dieback.

Repeatedly stripping boughs severely,  
Coupled with effects of drought,  
Increase the damage caused, you see,  
And may bring mortality about.

The trees in use for reclamation,  
Cost a lot to plant and grow.  
So I say with exclamation,  
Leave them be for a year or so!

In the scheme of things, I assume,  
There is a role that you must play.  
But surely, there must be some room,  
To save it for another day. ■

*Tom Hutchison*



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