

Current Facts & Statistics

Fall 2011 ISBN No. 978-1-4601-0243-5 (On-line Edition) Pub No. 1/612
Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

Gypsy Moth

Gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar*) is one of the most serious introduced pests of tree species in Canada. It prefers to feed on the leaves of oak trees, which are not native to Alberta's forests. However, it can damage and kill other deciduous tree species, such as maple, alder, birch, poplar, cherry, plum, willow, and many other tree and shrub species in Alberta.

Gypsy moth is not currently established in Alberta. However, surveys are conducted to detect the presence of gypsy moth. The department assists the Canadian Food Inspection Agency by setting up tent-shaped traps, known as Delta traps (Figure 1), with the synthetic female gypsy moth's sex pheromone lures (attractants) to attract gypsy moth males. In the summer, these Delta traps are set up in areas of high public use, such as campgrounds. If a moth is captured, the site can be monitored closely and appropriate action can be taken.

Figure 1. A Delta trap used for gypsy moth.



Photo courtesy of: Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Current Statistics

As shown in Table 1, a total of 55 traps were set up by the department on Alberta public land in 2011. This is a decrease from the 65 traps set up in both 2009 and 2010. However, similar to 2009

and 2010, no gypsy moths were recorded in 2011. Figure 2 shows a map of gypsy moth trap survey locations in 2011.

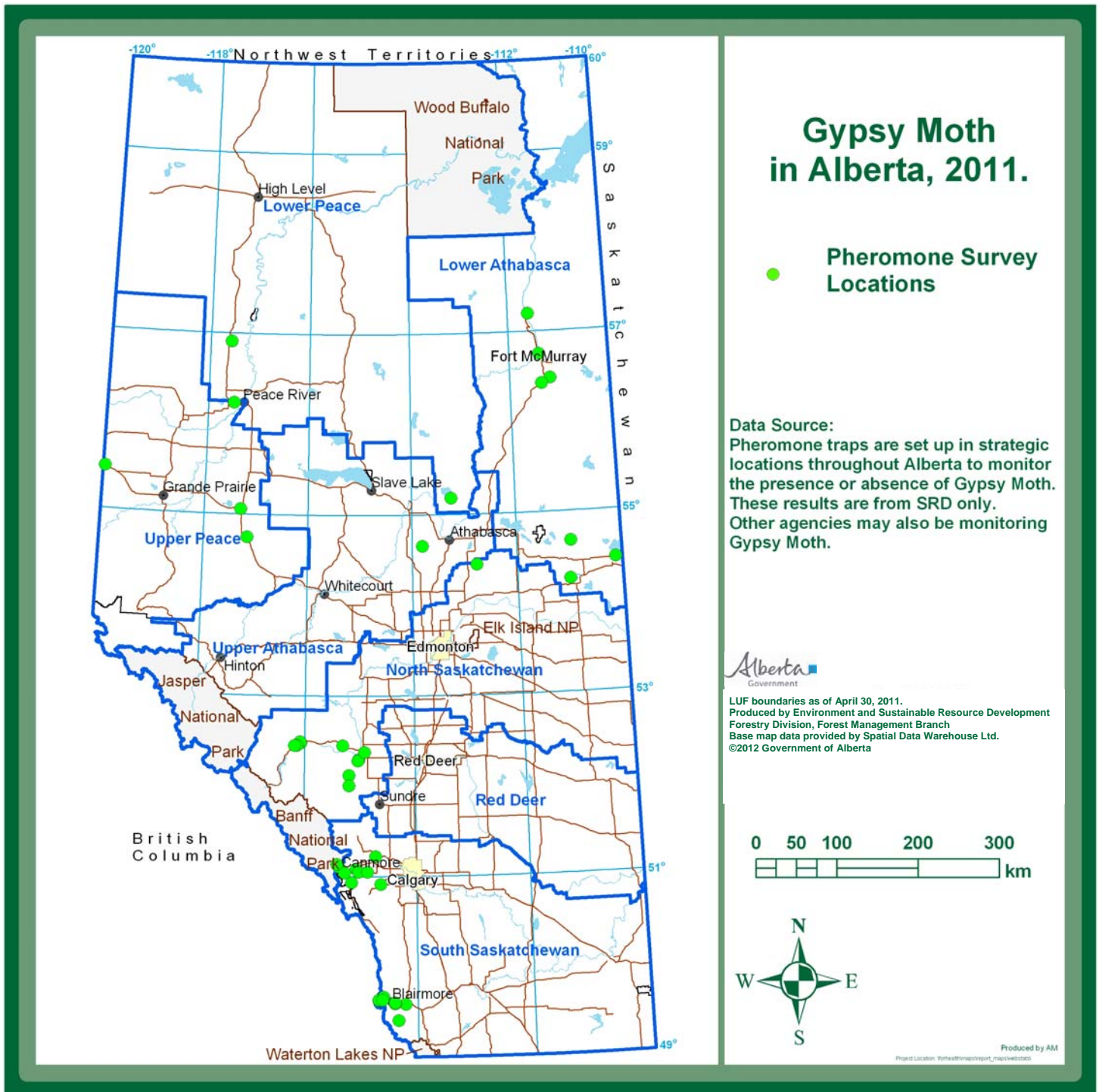
Table 1. Results of gypsy moth surveys carried out by using pheromone-baited traps on Alberta public land, 2011.¹

Land-use Framework Planning Region	Number of traps set up	Average moths per trap
Lower Athabasca	10	0
Lower Peace	0	0
North Saskatchewan	10	0
South Saskatchewan	18	0
Upper Athabasca	12	0
Upper Peace	5	0
Provincial Total	55	0

¹Preliminary results.

Current Statistics cont'd

Figure 2. Gypsy moth pheromone survey locations in Alberta, 2011.



Historical Trends

None of the traps placed by the department on Alberta public land have ever detected the presence of gypsy moth. However, some

municipalities (Edmonton, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat) have recorded gypsy moths in their traps.

Future Outlook

The department will continue to place the traps in high public-use locations in forested areas. Increased movement of people and equipment

into Alberta will increase the likelihood of introduction of this species. Figure 4 shows the significant damage caused by gypsy moths.

Figure 4. Examples of the damage (left) caused by gypsy moth young larvae feeding (right).



Photos courtesy of:
Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

