

## Insect Fact Sheet

### **Eastern Tent Caterpillar**

*Malacosoma americanum*

#### Description

Eastern Tent Caterpillar (ETC) is a pest native to North America. It is a social insect, living with several hundred other caterpillars inside silk webs in the crotches of branches. Larvae typically hatch in early March before feeding on foliage. Multiple webs can exist in a single tree causing widespread defoliation.

#### Symptoms & Diagnosis

ETC webs can easily be spotted by the distinct silk webs in branch crotches throughout a trees' canopy. ETC can be confused with Fall Web Worm, which forms its webs at branch tips. Heavy infestations result in total defoliation.

#### Treatment

Scouting for and removing egg masses before hatching is the best way to reduce infestation. Properly-timed spot applications may be used before the larvae fully mature. If webs are established, prune off affected branches or remove the webs by hand.

#### Management

Managing plant stress is a crucial component of insect management. Plants can remain healthier and aesthetically pleasing longer by properly managing water, avoiding compaction and grade changes, and controlling disease infestation. Fertilization improves tree vigor.

#### Affected Species

<i>Prunus spp.</i>	Cherry
<i>Crataegus spp.</i>	Hawthorns
<i>Quercus spp.</i>	Oak
<i>Fagus spp.</i>	Beech



The Eastern tent caterpillar will make a silken web within the crotches of branches.



Detection and prompt removal of egg masses is an effective measure against outbreak.