

## *What's Eating My Tree?*

# Eastern Tent Caterpillar



*If the leaves of your tree are being consumed, it is likely that the larval form of a moth is the culprit. In Southwest Ohio there are five common species: Bagworm, Eastern Tent Caterpillar, Fall Webworm, Forest Tent Caterpillar, and Gypsy Moth.*

### **Life Cycle:**

The eggs of the Eastern Tent Caterpillar hatch about the same time as the buds of the host tree begin to unfold in the spring. As soon as the larvae hatch, they begin the construction of a nest, or tent in a nearby crotch,

and they continue to enlarge it as they grow. When the larvae become full grown they leave the nest and begin to pupate. Pupa-tion occurs in tough silken cocoons dusted with yellow powder. They are found on the bark of trees, on fences,



and among deadleaves on the ground. When adults appear, they lay eggs in a mass on small twigs or branches.

*The Eastern Tent Caterpillar's preferred hosts are cherry and crabapple, but they will attack a wide variety of other trees.*

**Hosts:**

The Eastern Tent Caterpillar's preferred hosts are cherry and crabapple, but they will also attack a wide variety of other trees.

**Injury:**

Injury is caused by the larvae feeding on the foliage. The species is primarily a nuisance pest, however, infested trees may be disfigured.

**Control:**

The most effective of Eastern Tent Caterpillar is to prune off and burn twigs containing egg masses. The destruction of tents when they are still small is also effective. Sprays containing *Bacillus thuringiensis* (a microbial insecticide) work well to kill caterpillars if applied while the caterpillars are in the early stages of development.



CINCINNATI



PARKS