

**DOUGLAS-FIR TUSSOCK MOTH**  
*Orgyia pseudotsugata*

- Natural range -** Western United States and Canada
- Species affected -** Douglas-fir, true firs, spruces
- Type of damage -** Feeding on foliage. Young larvae feed on foliage of new shoots as the expand in spring, mature larvae feed on older foliage. Trees can be stripped of their foliage in a single growing season. Repeated defoliation can cause growth loss, top kill and tree death.
- Symptoms -** Infested trees have a thin appearance and a reddish-brown cast to the foliage. Mature larvae are large (12 to 2 inches long) and have a series of tufts or tussocks on the upper surface.
- Importance -** This is a major defoliator of forests in the western United States and adjoining parts of western Canada, however outbreaks in Colorado forests have not been a common occurrence. Outbreaks are cyclic, occurring at 7 to 10 year intervals and generally last 2-3 years.
- Remarks -** This insect also attacks ornamental trees in urban settings. Blue spruce is especially susceptible to this type of attack. In some areas of the west, infestations on urban trees are an indication that an outbreak in the forest is imminent.



Left – Douglas-fir tussock moth – egg mass  
Right – Mature larvae of Douglas-fir tussock moth



Severe defoliation by Douglas-fir tussock moth