

Lymantria dispar

Gypsy Moth
Asian Gypsy Moth

Invasive to Maine

Upland
Forests and Fields

Larval Form



NatureFreak07, Flickr

Gypsy moth larvae (caterpillars) are bristly and have two rows of colored bumps on their backs. There are blue bumps near the caterpillar's head and red bumps near its rear.

Habitat



USDA Forest Service

Gypsy moth females lay egg masses on tree trunks, branches, and in other sheltered places. Larvae hatch in the spring and prefer to eat the leaves of hardwoods (oak, apple, and birch).

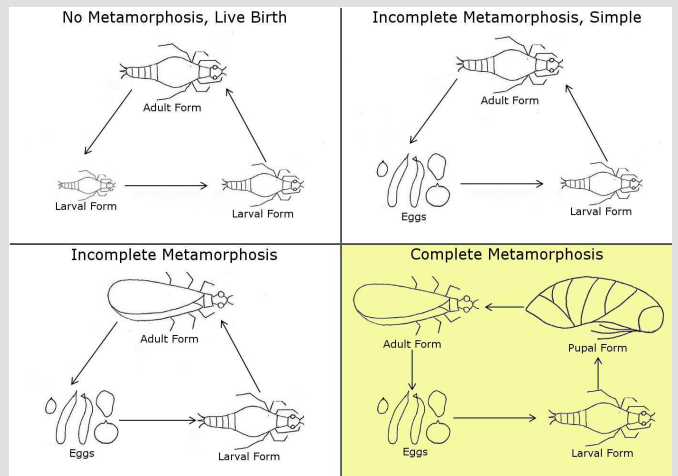
Life Cycle Description



Cowtools: Flickr, J Ghent: USDA, J Copony: Bugwood

Gypsy moths have a complete metamorphosis. Larvae enter the pupal stage in summer and emerge as adults 7 to 14 days later. Adults mate, females lay eggs, and both adults die.

Life Cycle Diagram



Adult Form



John H. Ghent, USDA Forest Service

Female gypsy moths are white with small V-shaped marks on their wings and males are brown with big, feathery antennae. Females are 3 to 3.5 cm long and males are 2 to 2.4 cm long.

Similar Species

The gypsy moth caterpillar and the eastern tent caterpillar both have blue spots and bristles. You can tell them apart by the red spots on the gypsy moth caterpillar and a yellow or white stripe on the eastern tent caterpillar. Also, eastern tent caterpillars build silk tents and gypsy moth caterpillars do not.

Fun Fact

Gypsy moth eggs were brought to Massachusetts in 1868 by a French scientist to hybridize with a native silk spinning caterpillar. When some of the moths escaped from his lab, they survived and started to multiply.

Researched and created by: Rebecca Martin

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