

Box Tree Moth

(*Cydalima perspectalis*)

The Box Tree Moth is a significant invasive pest of boxwood (*Buxus* spp.) Originally native to regions of Asia, the Box Tree Moth is now firmly established in Europe and more recently in parts of Eastern Canada and the U.S. While not known to be in our region, it is speculated that this pest could establish here if it were to be transported from an infested region. If it arrives, we want to stop it before it can establish.



Box Tree Moths generally have a white body with a brown border surrounding mostly white wings that reach a span of 1.6-1.8 in. However, some are almost completely brown with a small white streak on each of their forewings. Moths can lay single eggs or clusters of up to 20. Mature caterpillars are roughly 1.6 in. long and green-yellow with a black head and black and white stripes and dots running lengthwise down their body. When feeding, caterpillars may make a noticeable webbing on the leaves of the host.

Host Plants

Box Tree Moths generally feed on boxwood in the U.S. However, in their native range, they have been found to feed on burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*), Japanese spindletree (*E. japonicus*), purple holly (*Ilex chinensis*), and orange jessamine (*Murraya paniculata*) once nearby boxwood foliage is depleted.

Potential Impact

Box Tree Moth caterpillars are heavy defoliators. Unchecked, they can completely defoliate boxwood trees. Once they defoliate a boxwood, they may feed on the bark, causing additional damage and possible tree death.

If you suspect Box Tree Moths, please contact San Diego County's Plant Pest Diagnostics Lab below.



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
AGRICULTURE, WEIGHTS & MEASURES

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