



Washington State Department of Agriculture

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Gypsy moth catches down, no catches in areas treated this spring

OLYMPIA – The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](http://www.wa.gov/agriculture) (WSDA) has caught 25 gypsy moths during its annual trapping, down from the 42 moths caught in 2015.

Beginning this past June, WSDA placed more than 30,000 orange triangle-shaped traps on trees throughout the state to monitor for gypsy moths. The traps contained a pheromone lure to attract male gypsy moths. WSDA caught moths from July 21 until their last catch on Sept. 8. Moths were captured in Clark (1), Cowlitz (1), King (7), Kitsap (8), Kittitas (1), Mason (1), Pierce (4), Spokane (1), and Thurston (1) counties.

In the spring of 2016, WSDA conducted its second largest gypsy moth eradication effort in its history, treating more than 10,000 acres, including areas of Seattle and Tacoma. WSDA used a biological insecticide approved for organic farming and gardening. Six of the sites were treated for Asian gypsy moth and one site (Seattle) was treated for a European gypsy moth introduction.

None of the moths caught this summer were located in the areas that were treated for gypsy moth this past spring. Additionally, no Asian gypsy moths were caught this year after last year's record catch of 10 Asian gypsy moths.

"While it is too early to declare the spring treatments a success, this year's trapping results are very encouraging," said Jim Marra, WSDA's Pest Program Manager in charge of the gypsy moth program. Two to three years of trapping after treatment are necessary before WSDA determines whether a treatment has been successful.

This news comes on the heels of the largest gypsy moth outbreak in Eastern states since 1980, where the defoliation from hundreds of thousands of acres of trees could be seen from space this past summer. "By supporting eradication treatments when necessary and allowing insect traps, our communities are helping ensure that kind of destruction never happens here," Marra said.

WSDA's next step is to conduct egg mass surveys to look for signs of reproducing populations of gypsy moths in the catch areas. Once completed, the catch and egg mass survey data will inform WSDA's decision about what, if any, gypsy moth treatments may be necessary in 2017.

Visit WSDA's website at agr.wa.gov/gypsymoth for a detailed list of the 2016 gypsy moth catches.

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