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### **Oak Leaf Rollers:**

The oak leaf roller hatches in April, where they begin to feed on newly emerged oak leaves. At the end of April, the caterpillars drop from the trees and spin cocoons on plants near the tree or they may spin their cocoon in the tree itself. At the beginning of May, the adult moths emerge and lay their eggs on the twigs of oak, hackberry, pecan and walnut trees.

Most trees can withstand a limited amount of leaf loss; however repeat defoliation can reduce energy reserves of the tree due to refoiliation. If energy reserves are depleted too low, the tree will become vulnerable to diseases or invasions by other insects.

If these caterpillars are of concern, consider using insecticides that containing *Bacillus thuringiensis*, *B.t.* *B.t.* is a bacteria that produces crystals, which destroy the stomach lining of the caterpillar. However *B.t.* sprays should be applied early, before the caterpillars reach their full size of more than 1 inch. This insecticide will usually not kill larger caterpillars.



Photo by Elizabeth “Wizzie” Brown, CEA-IPM.

### **Spring Cankerworms:**

Spring cankerworms feed on a wide variety of trees including apple, ash, beech, elm, hickory, linden, maples and oaks. The caterpillars emerge in April through May and they rapidly feed on the tender spring leaves of various trees. These caterpillars, commonly referred to as inchworms, chew irregular holes in leaves. As the caterpillars grow, they can eat the entire leaf except for the major leaf veins. These caterpillars typically feed for 3 to 4 weeks before dropping to the ground to pupate.

Large, healthy trees can usually withstand total defoliation without significant damage. Generally, trees that lose their leaves to cankerworms early in the season will re-leaf and show no signs of damage later in the season.

However if these cankerworms are a problem one control option is *Bacillus thuringiensis*, *B.t.* *B.t.* is a bacteria that produces crystals, which destroy the stomach lining of the caterpillar. However *B.t.* sprays should be applied early, before the caterpillars reach their full size of more than 1 inch. This insecticide will usually not kill larger caterpillars.



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