

Locating and Destroying Spongy Moth Egg Masses

Destroying spongy moth in the egg mass stage can be an **effective** time to control spongy moth populations and provide an alternative to pesticide use. Removing egg masses can potentially prevent the hatching of up to 1000 caterpillars per egg mass, and therefore lower the overall negative impact to trees on your property caused by defoliation.

What do they look like?

Spongy moth egg masses are fuzzy, tan in colour, and range in size from a dime to larger than a toonie. The egg masses are laid individually or in large clumps.



Where are they found?

Egg masses can be laid on just about all surfaces but prefer sheltered, flat areas such as the underside of tree branches, the crevices of fences, patio furniture, and landscaping rocks.



When can they be destroyed?

Egg masses can be destroyed as soon as they are laid in mid-August until the end of April. It is recommended to wait until the leaves have fallen from the tree for better visibility.

Required Supplies

- Flat object such as a butter knife or plastic paint scraper
- Catchment container or bag to collect the egg masses
- Bucket of soapy water. Dish soap works well

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Regularly check your property for egg masses. Once an egg mass or group of egg masses is located, follow these steps to destroy them:

1. Place your catchment container below the egg mass.
2. Use your scraper tool to remove the egg mass from the surface. Ensure that all eggs are scraped. Try not to leave any residual eggs in bark ridges or crevices.
3. Empty the contents of your catchment container or bag into a bucket of soapy water.
4. Leave the eggs sitting in the bucket for a day or two, then dispose of the contents.

Egg masses can be located high up in trees. Care needs to be taken if trying to access anything aloft, especially if using ladders. Some private tree care companies can be hired to provide this service at heights.