



Dogwood sawfly

Macremphytus tarsatus

Order Hymenoptera, Family Tenthredinidae;
common sawflies
Native pest

Host plants: Dogwood, particularly gray and redosier

Description: Adult sawflies are wasplike. After the second molt, larvae become covered in a white powdery substance. They change color pattern several times during their development. Fully-grown larvae are approximately 25 mm long and have mottled black spots on a cream background.

Life history: Adult sawflies emerge over a period from May to July. Eggs are inserted into leaf tissue, often a hundred at a time. There is one generation a year.

Overwintering: Larvae in prepupal cells inside cells chewed in logs, landscape timbers, and wooden structures.

Damage symptoms: In early summer, young larvae are gregarious feeders and skeletonize leaves. By late summer, leaves are fully consumed so that only the midvein remains.

Monitoring: Look for groups of larvae in early summer feeding on the underside of leaves that are being skeletonized.

Chemical control: Chemical control of sawfly larvae is only effective when the larvae are less than 25 mm long, because after that point larvae stop feeding and begin to prepare cocoons. Horticultural oils and soaps are effective against sawfly larvae.

Biological control: Sometimes attacked by a gregarious wasp parasitoid.

Plant mortality risk: Low

Biorational pesticides: azadirachtin, horticultural oil, insecticidal soap, pyrethrins, spinosad

Conventional pesticides: acephate, bifenthrin, carbaryl, chlorpyrifos (nursery only), cyfluthrin, deltamethrin, fluralinate, imidacloprid, lambda-cyhalothrin, malathion, permethrin



Dogwood sawfly larva; notice the white powdery appearance of the larva. (79)
Photo: John Davidson