

Oak Processionary Moth – 2017 update 2

18 April 2017

Welcome to the second Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) programme update for 2017.

The first reports of OPM caterpillars emerging have come through - one in the Richmond area of London and the other from the Netherlands, both on 31 March. This compares with 9 April last year and 21 March 2014.

Programme update

The attached document sets out the operational programme for this this year - continuing the surveillance and control approach we have pursued since 2013.

It won't be long now until the spraying programme commences as per the programme. The timing of the spraying is very much dependant on Oak leaf emergence; we are preparing on the basis of beginning control work during the week commencing 17 April, though there will need to be at least 40% of the tree with leaves out for the first spray to take place.

Contractors have been given their instructions for the OPM control; along with the Statutory Plant Health Notices that have been sent out to site owners.

Some species of caterpillars can be mistaken for OPM - this [page on the Forestry Commission website](#) provides a useful guide to identifying OPM. I've received reports of Brown Tail Moth which have been seen recently especially in Essex and Cambridge. This is a native caterpillar with hairs that are also an irritant.

Training events

We are holding survey training events on 25th & 30th May and 1st June in Richmond Park. These are for anyone interested in learning how to survey effectively for OPM nests, but will be particularly useful to tree officers, foresters, forestry workers, green-keepers, ground-care workers and managers of properties with oak trees.

Places are free to attend but limited to about 25 at each event. Please request your place by sending an email to opm@forestry.gsi.gov.uk as soon as possible.

If demand is high we might be able to run more training events; we will let you know through this newsletter.

OPM Programme Update

And finally...

You can help us to help you.

So we can provide the most up-to-date and comprehensive OPM reports – including developments outside the Defra/FC funded work - please send us information on your OPM activity via the email opm@forestry.gsi.gov.uk .

Please do forward this update to anyone who may interested.

To stay up to date with OPM and other tree pests & diseases, you can also sign up to receive our free quarterly e-newsletter [Tree Health News](#) or follow [@CraigHarrisonFC](#) on Twitter.

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