

YELLOWHEADED SPRUCE SAWFLY—*Pikonema alaskensis*

HOSTS: Spruce

IDENTIFICATION, LIFE CYCLE, AND DAMAGE: Young larvae are light yellowish-green with several grayish-green longitudinal stripes. Mature larvae are about 19 mm long, are olive-green with six longitudinal stripes down the body, and have a yellowish-brown head. The adult is tan and wasp-like, but the base of the abdomen is broadly joined to the thorax.

Adults emerge in early spring about the time spruce buds expand. Females lay eggs in current year's needles. Young larvae feed on new needles; older larvae feed on older needles. In July larvae drop to the ground and spin cocoons in the soil where they overwinter as mature larvae. When disturbed, larvae rear up in a characteristic "s"-shape.

Young trees less than 3 m tall and growing in the open are very susceptible to infestation. Three or four consecutive years of heavy defoliation can kill a tree.

CONTROL: Spray foliage in mid-June with carbaryl if trees are heavily infested or if trees are large. When trees and infestations are small, hand remove larvae from trees and kill them.



Yellowheaded spruce sawfly larvae