

ELM SAWFLY—*Cimbex americana*

HOSTS: Elm, willow, maple, cottonwood and other poplars, and other hardwoods

IDENTIFICATION, LIFE CYCLE, AND DAMAGE: Young caterpillars are slate-gray. Older caterpillars are yellowish-green with a black dorsal stripe and a wart-like skin texture. Adults are 25 mm long with smoky-gray wings. The body may be either reddish-brown to black or black with yellow spots.

Adult elm sawflies emerge during spring and summer, and females deposit eggs in leaves. They feed on sap by cutting transverse slits in the bark of twigs. Larvae feed on leaves during the summer and migrate to the ground to overwinter as pupae. Heavily infested trees can be completely defoliated. Caterpillars rear up in a characteristic “s”-shape when disturbed.

Although severe defoliation reduces tree vigor,

outbreaks of elm sawfly are rare.

CONTROL: Spray leaves with carbaryl when leaf damage is first noticed.



Elm sawfly larva