



Forest Health Protection, Southern Region

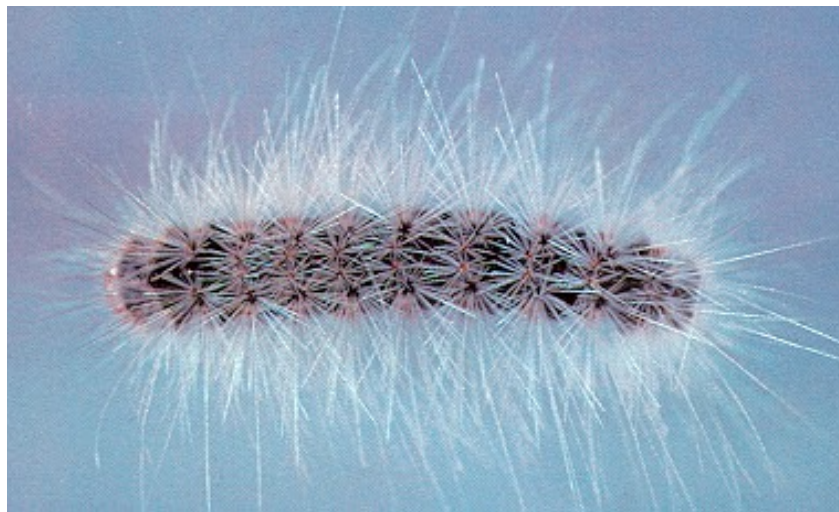
# FALL WEBWORM,

*Hyphantria cunea* (Drury)

---

**Importance.** - The fall webworm is not considered an important forest pest. However, ugly webs can seriously detract from aesthetic values. The preferred hosts in the South are persimmon, pecan, and sourwood.

**Identifying the Insect.** - The adult moth has a wingspan of 1 (25 mm) to 1 1/4(31 mm) inches and is snowy white, usually with dark spots on the wings. The larvae are 1 (25 mm) to 1 1/4 (31 mm) inches long and covered with silky hairs. The color varies from pale yellow to green, with a black stripe on the back and a yellow stripe on each side.



Larva.

---

The pupae are found inside a gray cocoon constructed of silk, frass, and debris. The eggs are small, yellow, or light green, and turn gray before hatching.

**Identifying the Injury.** - Usually the first signs of attack are the large, silken web and skeletonized leaves. The silken web usually contains large numbers of caterpillars.



Typical damage showing large tents.

---

**Biology.** - The moths emerge in the spring. After mating, females lay eggs in masses (400 to 500) on the undersides of host leaves. The eggs hatch in approximately 2 weeks, and the larvae immediately begin to feed and construct webs. They enlarge the web as they continue to feed for 4 to 8 weeks. Then they spin a pupal cocoon in a sheltered place or in the duff or soil. There are at least two generations per year in the South.

**Control.** - Biotic agents, and unfavorable weather take their toll of these insects. Occasionally, chemical control may be necessary.

---