

Codling Moth

Description

The adults are a gray colored moth, but are rarely seen. The larvae are pinkish-white with a brown head.

Plants Affected

Apple, pear, crabapple and hawthorn.



Symptoms/Damage



Fruit

This pest is one of the most damaging insects of apple and pear. Larval feeding causes fruit damage. The larvae bore a tunnel to the core of the fruit and feed on seeds. A brown sawdust-like material extrudes from the entry hole.

Codling moth damage can be confused with apple maggot damage. The difference is codling moth feeds in the core and the apple maggot tunnels throughout the flesh.

Bark

Larvae pupating in cocoons may be visible in bark crevices, particularly during the winter months.

Life Cycle

The codling moth spends the winter as a mature larva in a cocoon. Larvae are found under loose bark on the tree, litter at the base of the tree, or in woodpiles. Overwintering larvae begin changing into pupae when the apple blossoms first display pink color.

The first adult moths begin to emerge in mid-spring, when the buds are red, and lay eggs. First generation eggs are laid primarily on leaves, though some are found on fruit. Newly hatched larvae find fruit and enter either at the blossom end or through the side. They bore through the skin and feed on the flesh for a few days, then move towards the core where they feed on seeds.

In three to four weeks, when the larvae are fully grown, they leave the fruit in search of sheltered places to spin cocoons. Second generation adults typically begin emerging in mid-summer, and in exceptionally warm years a third generation may occur.

Management

Cultural

- Rake up and dispose of apples on the ground.
- Remove and destroy all litter from under the tree.

Biological

- Naturally present and released parasitic wasps can decrease the number of eggs being hatched.
- Pheromone traps placed in the spring can help reduce populations. The males are attracted to the traps and are caught in the sticky interior.

Chemical

- An approved insecticide can be used to control codling moth by 3-4 weekly foliar treatments, when most of the flowers have fallen.