



BOX TREE MOTH MONITORING PROGRAM IN ONTARIO

APRIL 2021

Dear Horticultural Society or Master Gardener,

I am contacting you today to discuss a newly invasive pest to Ontario called the **Box Tree Moth (BTM)** and how your Society's members can be involved in our monitoring program.

Native to Asia, BTM was first detected in Etobicoke in 2018. The larval stage, more commonly called caterpillars, consume leaf material of all boxwood varieties usually causing moderate plant damage. However, if feeding persists over many years, plant death is possible. My name is Abbie Wiesner and I am a graduate student from the University of Guelph working on the BTM project with partners from government agencies (OMAFRA and CFIA), industry representatives (Landscape Ontario) and researchers (UofG and UofT). Together we are investigating BTM in Ontario's unique climate to determine the pest's biology and current geographical spread with the goal of developing a sustainable pest management program. This is done through pheromone trap monitoring and conducting physical plant inspections throughout the summer, but we need your help to achieve this.

There has been a potential positive identification of BTM in the NOTL area. We need your help to investigate the extent of the pest's presence in the area. We are looking for participants with boxwood on their properties who can:

- Host and hang a box tree moth pheromone trap approximately 1 meter from the ground, within 20 feet of boxwood plants, from May to September 30th, 2021.
- Open the trap on the same day each week and email me (Abbie at awiesner@uoguelph.ca) the number of BTM moths found (with photos of moths found)
- Hold a pheromone lure in the freezer, open the packet and drop the lure into the trap on August 15th (each trap comes loaded with a 3-month lure)

It would be greatly appreciated if you could share this information and the call for participants to your members. If members have boxwood plants on their property and are interested in participating, they can contact me directly through this email (awiesner@uoguelph.ca). Feel free to share this message with friends and family as we are interested in hosting traps across Southern Ontario with a focus on cities surrounding the Toronto area and as stated a focus in the NOTL area.

Additionally, as temperatures warm in the coming weeks, keep an eye on your boxwood plants for signs of feeding BTM larva (caterpillars). If larvae are found, consider contacting me before applying treatment as our team would be interested in collecting larval samples. In general, if you have any questions regarding the pest, please feel free to reach out. Also, you can contact Landscape Ontario (see below) to report a sighting of BTM.

Landscape Ontario:

- 1-800-265-5656 or 905-875-1805 (ext. 2301) or email mgreaves@landscapeontario.com.
- [Landscape Ontario Box Tree Moth Resource Page](#)
- [CFIA Box Tree Moth Factsheet](#)

Thank you,

Abigail Wiesner

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