

PEST: Box Tree Moth

BASIC PROFILE: Box tree moth (BTM) is a native of East Asia and is an invasive pest that can damage and potentially kill boxwood plants that are not properly managed. The BTM caterpillars in heavily infested areas can completely defoliate boxwoods. After they have defoliated the plant, the caterpillars will feed on the bark which will eventually kill the plant. The adults are typically white with a brown margin around their wings, but there is a less common variant that is fully brown with small white spots on the forewing.

LDAF ACTIVITY: While conducting routine wholesale and retail nursery inspections, LDAF inspectors will be looking for BTM. If an inspector finds a possible BTM suspect, the plant material that the specimen was found on will be stop ordered and held until the insect has been identified. A positive BTM identification will result in the material either being destroyed or shipped back to its origin.

