

Gypsy moth: less welcome than the in-laws

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Gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar*) is a serious forest pest, causing considerable economic losses in many parts of the world. It is not present in New Zealand, but is a frequent interception (usually as eggs) at the country's ports of entry. In response to the risk of gypsy moth establishing in New Zealand, a national surveillance programme was initiated in 1992. ASUREQuality delivers this programme for the Ministry for Primary Industries, with Scion as a partner providing the diagnostics component. To date, only one adult gypsy moth has been trapped (in Hamilton, March 2003). This find triggered an intensive eradication programme after which no further gypsy moths were found. An overview of gypsy moth including biology, distribution, potential risk and future directions for surveillance in New Zealand will be presented.

