

## Pest Profile



**Photo credit:** David Keith & Tim Miller, UNL Entomology Extension

**Common Name:** Fall Cankerworm

**Scientific Name:** *Alsophila pometaria*

**Order and Family:** Lepidoptera, Geometridae

**Size and Appearance:**

|                             | Length (mm)   | Appearance  |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Egg</b>                  | 1.0 mm  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• dark grayish-brown with a dot and a ring on top</li></ul>   |
| <b>Larva/Nymph</b>          | 25.0 mm (mature larvae)                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• vary between light green and dark brownish-green</li><li>• have white lines running down their body from the head to the tip of the abdomen</li><li>• dark-brownish green caterpillars have a black stripe the length of their back</li></ul> |
| <b>Adult</b>                | 25.0 – 35.0 mm (male wingspread)<br>10.0 – 12.0 mm (female) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• males are small, have wings, and are grayish color with some white lines along the wings</li><li>• females have a grayish colored body and wingless</li></ul>   |
| <b>Pupa (if applicable)</b> |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• yellow to yellow-green in color</li><li>• wrapped in a silken cocoon</li></ul>  |

**Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.):** Chewing (caterpillar)

**Host plant/s:** black cherry, basswood, red and white oaks, beech, ash, boxelder, elm, sugar and red maples

**Description of Damage (larvae and adults):**

When the larvae are young, they eat on the underside of the leaves, making the leaf appear skeletonized. As the larvae get older, they cause more damage by eating almost the whole leaf. In some cases, the damage is to the extent of defoliation of the tree, especially in severe cases of outbreaks. Sometimes in bad outbreaks, these caterpillars can defoliate many trees.

**References:**

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