

Banding Together to Fight Cankerworms



Cankerworms

Cankerworms are pests that threaten the health of trees in Durham and throughout the US. These small inchworms feed on leaves of trees and shrubs, weakening plants and decreasing their ability to resist pests and environmental stress such as drought and heat.



These little, green worms turn into moths that damage trees.



Cankerworms have reached outbreak levels over the last few years in parts of Durham. This infestation is partially due to the cankerworms' preference for old willow oaks, like those that line the streets of Durham's neighborhoods and around Duke's campus. The cankerworms' extensive feeding makes Durham trees more vulnerable to dying.

Control

Thankfully, with effort, the cankerworm population can be controlled!

- Female cankerworm moths are flightless.
- The females crawl to the top of large trees, lay their eggs on twigs, and then die.
- The eggs hatch and the caterpillars feed on the leaves, then drop to the ground to pupate (cocoon) in the earth.
- In the fall or spring, they emerge as moths to start the cycle over.

Banding trees with a sticky barrier blocks the flightless female moths from crawling to the tops of trees and laying eggs, stopping the cankerworm cycle.

Questions? Call (919) 560-0528
www.TreesAcrossDurham.org

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What You Can Do

To help contain the cankerworm population, the City of Durham encourages you to band the trees in your neighborhood.

Requirements:

- Staple gun for rough barked trees
- Duct tape for smooth barked trees
- Inner layer (e.g. burlap or insulation foam) about 8" wide
- Outer layer (e.g. woven tarp material, roofing paper, or plastic) about 6" wide
- Disposable gloves
- Tanglefoot™ (non-drying glue)
- Putty knife

Materials can be purchased at most local hardware and gardening stores. A limited amount of materials can be checked out at the Main Library through December.

Bands should be up around Halloween, glue applied around Thanksgiving, and taken down around St. Patrick's Day.



How to Band

- 1) In early fall, around Halloween (October-November), wrap inner layer around the tree, about 4-6 feet from the ground
- 2) Make sure all cracks and crevices have been filled in so moths can't crawl under it
- 3) Apply outer layer on top of the band
- 4) Use staples or tape to secure the outer layer on top of the inner layer and to the tree
- 5) After most leaves have fallen, around Thanksgiving (November-December), use the putty knife and gloves to apply Tanglefoot™ approximately 1/8" thick and at least 6" wide on the band.
- 6) In spring, around St. Patrick's Day (March), remove the bands from the trees. Removing the band prevents rot from developing under the band during the summer.

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