

**Problem:** Yellownecked Caterpillar - *Datana ministra*



**Hosts:** Very broad host range including apple, pear, cherry, oak, hickory, beech, birch, elm, maple, pear, cherry, oak and walnut.

**Description:** Yellownecked caterpillars overwinter as pupae. Moths deposit eggs probably in late June and July. Egg masses may contain up to 100 eggs. Eggs within individual masses reportedly hatch simultaneously. Larvae are gregarious and have a prominent yellow to orangish-yellow, neck prothoracic shield, immediately behind the jet black head capsule. After feeding up to six weeks, matured descend trees and enter the ground where they pupate and overwinter. There is one generation per year.

**Recommendations:** Skeletonization of lower leaf surfaces by small larvae generally goes unnoticed. Larger larvae consume all but leaf petioles. However, defoliation late in the season does not harm the health of the tree. Insecticides recommended for control or regulation include *Bacillus thuringiensis* subsp. *kurstaki* (Dipel), spinosad (Conserve, Fertilome Borer, Bagworm, Leafminer & Tent Caterpillar Spray, Captain Jack's Dead Bug Brew), indoxacarb (Provaunt), chlorantraniliprole (Acelepryn), and pyrethroids (e.g. bifenthrin, cyfluthrin, and lambda-cyhalothrin). Be sure to apply insecticides (especially Dipel) when caterpillars are small. Yellownecked caterpillars are highly susceptible to many natural enemies such as birds (e.g. robins), predaceous bugs, and parasitic flies.

**References:**

1. [Yellownecked Caterpillar](#), Penn State Entomological Notes
2. [Yellownecked Caterpillar](#), Ohio State University Ornamental Fact Sheet

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