

# Operophtera brumata

winter moth

Invasive to Maine

Upland Forests

## Adult Form



Gyorgy Csoka, forestryimages.org

From Nov.-Jan., look at lights and on tree trunks for small, grayish-brown moths with 1 inch wingspans. Flightless females have wing stubs ¼ their body length.

## Habitat



Dimitrios Avtzis, forestryimages.org

Look for maple, oak, ash, apple, & crabapple trees (blueberries & roses too). Moths lay eggs in the trunks of these trees. Find caterpillars webbed in buds & flowers.

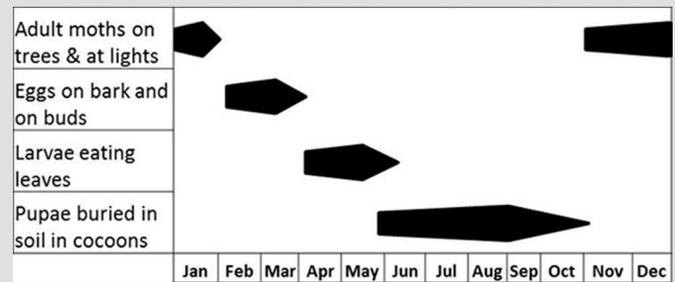
## Life Cycle Description



forestryimages.org: Csoka,Zubrik,Lemme; C. Donahue

In June caterpillars bury themselves in the soil. They make cocoons and pupate inside the cocoon. Moths emerge from Nov-Jan. to mate and lay eggs on tree trunks.

## Life Cycle Timeline



## Similar Species

Invasive winter moth and native Bruce spanworm (*Operophtera bruceata*) look very similar. Female Bruce spanworm have almost no wing stubs. Males have a faint wavy band running across the front wings near the bottom edge, while the winter moth has a broken band of hatch marks. They are hard to distinguish without dissecting them.

Please post your observations of BOTH SPECIES as "Operophtera spp." to [www.vitalsignsme.org](http://www.vitalsignsme.org) to alert the Maine Forest Service and VS community

## Larval Form



Milan Zubrik, forestryimages.org

In April and May, look for smooth green inchworms with narrow white stripes and just two prolegs. Caterpillars use silk strands to "balloon" from tree to tree.

## Did You Know?

Because winter moth cocoons are in the soil from June through Nov, they are often inadvertently moved to new places when people dig up and move plants to different places, taking the cocoons with them in the soil. Winter moths were first reported in Maine in 2011.