

Box Caterpillar - *Cydalima perspectallis*

What are they?

Box tree caterpillars are the larvae of a moth that feeds on **box** (*Buxus*) plants. It is native to East Asia and became established in Europe in 2007. It was not until 2011 that larvae were reported in private gardens in the home counties. By the end of 2014 the moth had become established in parts of London and south east. If left, the caterpillars will cause severe defoliation.

The main time for infestation is spring to autumn.

Main symptoms...

- Pale yellow eggs on the underside of leaves
- Clumps missing and silk like webbing
- Stalks left where leaves have been eaten
- Green caterpillars with black heads present
- Leaves looking anaemic / yellowing
- Severe defoliation



Can I control or eradicate it? - Yes!

- Watch out for moth! They appear in summer to lay the second generation of larvae.
- Wherever practical, remove the caterpillars by hand, or prune out stems covered in the webbing.
- Use a programme of biological / natural sprays, traps and nematodes.



Chemical & Ecological / Natural - Products available

Some chemical sprays are available to the home and garden market and some for professional use only. A regular regime of spraying is required.

Always read the guidelines for spraying applications.

- Xen Tari (available from Amazon - not available in garden centres)
- BugClear Ultra!
- Provanto Ultimate Fruit & Vegetable Bug Killer
- Vitax Box Tree Moth Trap in conjunction with DragonFli Box Tree Caterpillar Killer Nematodes.



A thorough spraying is needed to penetrate the webbing.

Alternatives

Other plants are available that are not affected by the caterpillar, many can achieve the tightly clipped effect of box such as *Euonymus* and *Ilex*.

There is great choice of colours, textures and form available.

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| • <i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i>
'Golf Ball' | • <i>Euonymus japonicus</i> 'Greenspire' | • <i>Ilex crenata</i> |
| • <i>Euonymus fortunei</i> | • <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> | • <i>Lonicera nitida</i> |
| • <i>Pittosporum ten.</i>
'Silver Ball' | • <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> 'Otto
Luyken' | • <i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> |