

## Moths

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Moths, and particularly their caterpillars, are a major agricultural pest in many parts of the world.

Examples include corn borers and bollworms. The caterpillar of the gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar*) causes severe damage to forests in the northeast United States, where it is an invasive species. In temperate climates, the codling moth causes extensive damage, especially to fruit farms. In tropical and subtropical climates, the diamondback moth (*Plutella xylostella*) is perhaps the most serious pest of brassicaceous crops.

Several moths in the family Tineidae are commonly regarded as pests because their larvae eat fabric such as clothes and blankets made from natural proteinaceous fibers such as wool or silk. They are less likely to eat mixed materials containing artificial fibers. There are some reports that they can be repelled by the scent of wood from juniper and cedar, by lavender, or by other natural oils. However, many consider this unlikely to prevent infestation. Naphthalene (the chemical used in mothballs) is considered more effective, but there are concerns over its effects on human health. Moth larvae may be killed by freezing the items which they infest for several days at a temperature below  $-8\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $17.6\text{ }^{\circ}\text{F}$ ).

Moths are sturdy and usually are more resistant to pesticides than are mosquitoes and flies.