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Invertebrate of the Month

December-January 2010-2011



Uraba lugens

This particular caterpillar is present throughout Australia's southern eucalypt forests, particularly liking *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (in eastern Australia) and jarrah in Western Australia. It is also found on other eucalypts and *Corymbia* spp including marri. In the early stages of its life cycle the larvae skeletonize the leaf, and then as they get older they munch the leaf down to the mid rib. Late stage larvae can abseil from their feeding sites if they run out of food or are disturbed. It outbreaks on various hosts throughout Australia, and in Western Australia caused severe defoliation of the southern jarrah forest from 1982-1992. Feeding in the southern jarrah forest occurs from February to the following January and damage is evident from October onwards. In the last 2 years populations of this caterpillar have again increased in the jarrah forest and are in outbreak north-west and east of Manjimup. DEC Science Division is currently measuring population levels and building on knowledge from the past outbreak.