

# Bugs & Blights

Sharon J. Collman | WSU Snohomish County Extension

## Sawflies deserve some special attention.

Last summer was "sawfly summer" with new introduced species as well as a resurgence of native sawflies.



Eggs of dogwood sawfly inserted in leaf tissue; hatching delayed till mid to late July.



Azalea sawfly matches leaf edge (early June, one generation per year.



Pear slug or cherry slug – larva under protective slime; larvae only skeletonize leaves.



Willow sawflies with typical line-up of larvae; note predator feeding on larva.



Imported currantworm seems to defoliate currant overnight. Watch for first patches of holes in leaves.



Adult currantworm with thin body, shiny wings and rectangular head.

**Sawfly life styles are varied:** there are leafminers (on elm and birch), gall makers on willow, and some bore into wood when they pupate. The defoliators are the most noticeable of all and leave tell-tale skeletons of midribs and secondary veins. The larvae which are caterpillar-like are not going to become moths. These Hymenoptera, or members of the bee and wasp family, will become dark, fly-like adults. The saw is the ovipositor which has little teeth for cutting into leaf tissue to insert their eggs. These caterpillars have seven or more pairs of fleshy false legs (prolegs) behind their 3 pair of true legs, and they have eyes. However, *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) which is effective on moth larvae is not effective on sawflies. If you are alert and catch them early, you can avoid damage. Some have several generations in a summer so that damage accumulates and quickly. The trick is catching the larvae before they drop to the soil to pupate.

### Sawflies are pretty par-tic-u-lar about their host plants.

In fact, there seems to be a different sawfly for each kind of host plant. One thing I've learned about insects is they are infinitely varied and sometimes unpredictable. For example, many sawflies emerge with the new leaves in spring (except dogwood sawfly which doesn't show up until mid July to August).

So here's a little medley of common sawflies. For more info visit [www.puyallup.wsu.edu/plantclinic/resources/pdf/pls64sawflies.pdf](http://www.puyallup.wsu.edu/plantclinic/resources/pdf/pls64sawflies.pdf)

*Watch for new publications as WSU faculty begin a series of revised and expanded publications.*