

# Aspen Blotch Leafminer (Tentiform leafminer)

Scientific Name: *Phyllonorycter* sp.

**Hosts:** Aspen, poplar, cottonwood

**Damage/symptoms:** The caterpillar feeding and mining cause white blotches on the underside of the leaves. Heavy outbreaks can cause reduced tree growth and branch dieback.



Figure 1. Aspen blotch leafminer damage. S. Katovich, Bugwood.

**Life cycle:** Adult moths emerge from overwintering sites and feed on nectar. Females mate and deposit several eggs on newly emerging leaves. The larvae develop and feed within the leaf, causing blotchy looking tissue. They pupate, and the adults emerge in late summer as leaves are starting to senesce.

**Management:** The leafminers attack stressed trees. Normally, no treatment is necessary, and the pests are controlled by natural enemies later in the summer. Keep trees well cared for with frequent watering. If practical, pick off and dispose of the mined leaves. If chemical controls are necessary, systemic insecticides (active ingredients such as imidacloprid or dinotefuran) can be used but have been known to be only moderately effective. The best time to spray a systemic insecticide is in the spring after bud break to allow for sufficient uptake of the chemical.

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Disclaimer: These recommendations are provided only as a guide. It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. If any information in these recommendations disagrees with the label, the recommendation must be disregarded. No endorsement is intended for products mentioned. The authors and Montana State University assume no liability resulting from the use of these recommendations. The Montana State University Extension Service is an ADA/EO/AA/Veteran's Preference Employer and Provider of Educational Outreach.