

# HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT

# **SAFETY ALERT**

Issued June 2024  
Number 072024

## Environmental – Hazardous Moths

Delegation	Ringway
Business Unit	East M&R – Spooner Row Depot
Date & Time	May 2024
Nature of Incident	Tree branches of an oak tree covered in Oak Processionary Moths



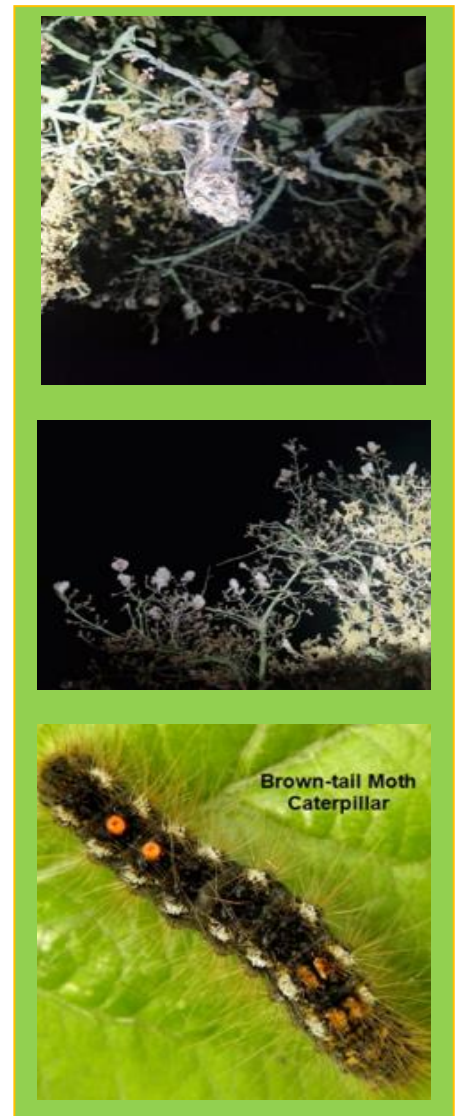
### Tree maintenance activities on the A14

Whilst carrying out detailed tree maintenance on the A14, it was noted that the branches of an Oak tree that had been felled was covered in what was assumed to be, OPM (Oak Processionary Moth) caterpillars and moth sacks. These moths are harmful to humans and can cause severe skin irritation and breathing difficulties. **Work was stopped immediately, and the site cleared.**

The site was revisited during the daytime, where upon further investigation, the sacks were determined to be Brown-Tail moth caterpillars. These caterpillars are native to the UK but also have similar irritant setae which can replicate the effects of the OPM.

### The following actions were taken:

1. Due to the works taking place at night, a daytime specific risk assessment was completed prior to any further works taking place.
2. A review of the risk assessment and method statement was undertaken considering the new hazard and appropriate control measures were put in place:
  - trees were to be doused in water.
  - operatives to wear full face respirator, full body coverall including hood, work gloves (cuffs to be overlapped by coverall), ankle high boots (cuffs to be overlapped by coverall).
  - all wood to be chipped and chippings collected in bags to prevent potential spread of airborne irritants.
  - all chippings and PPE post works to be incinerated.



**Please share this alert across your Business Units, including use of notice boards, use of toolbox talks or inclusion in daily 5 minutes for safety briefings. Keep the alert on notice boards for a period of 1 month.**

**Phil Parslow**  
Head of Health, Safety & Environment Ringway