



# NATIONAL BIOSECURITY AGENCY

## THE INVASION OF "HAIRY CATERPILLAR" (*EUPROCTIS SPP*) IN SEYCHELLES



### INTRODUCTION

Invasive alien species (IAS) are plants, animals or micro-organisms, whose introduction or spread into new territories, threatens the environment, the economy, or society, including human health.

IAS are widely considered to be the second biggest global threat to biodiversity after habitat loss and the increase in the incidence and spread of IAS globally is directly related to the increase in international Trade, Travel and Tourism.

The pressure of IAS is also felt by island economies. Small Islands Developing States are amongst the most vulnerable of the developing countries and depend upon the conservation and sustainable use of Island Biodiversity for their Sustainable Development.

Unfortunately, Seychelles is currently experiencing a serious infestation of an urticating hairy type of caterpillar species known by its local name as "Senir Plim" or "Hairy Caterpillay" in English.

The "Hairy caterpillar" species has been observed as a major defoliator of several plant species in Seychelles thus causing a threat to the Biodiversity of the country.

The damage caused significantly reduces the development and vitality of the plants/trees.

Although this in itself results in a major environmental problems, what is of concern is the impact on human health that come in close proximity of the caterpillars when they invade homes, buildings or other structures in search for food and pupation sites.

The government is currently implementing an intensive intervention program to effectively suppress and control the pest under our condition

Please note that this occurrence does affect local or international tourism travel and trade.

The main purpose of this flyer is to sensitize the general public as well as the visitors on health and safety precautions they need to take

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



# ADVISORY FOR VISITORS

## ADULT STAGE

The Adult Moth is white in colour

The Moth is mainly active in the evening and can be seen on affected plants.



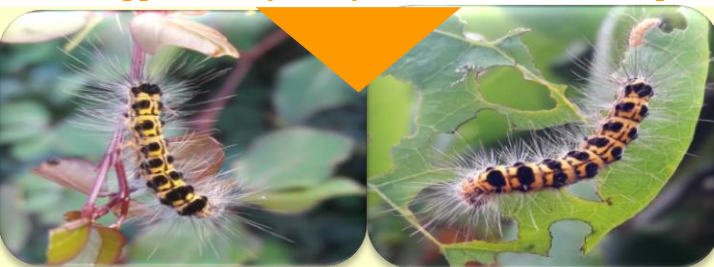
## EGG STAGE

The eggs are deposited under the leaves and are wrapped with urticating hairs from a large yellow tuft and appear a creamy light brownish in color



## LARVA STAGE

Newly emerge larvae are found in clusters, appear brownish to yellowish and when fully developed the larvae appears hairy with yellowish color & back spot



## PUPA STAGE

The pupa (cocoon) are dark brown in color and has an oval shape and tend to locate on bark clefts, wall cracks and corners



## SIGN/SYMPTOMS IF IN CONTACT WITH THE "HAIRY CATERPILLAR"

- Discomfort, itching, skin rashes or serious irritations can develop when micro-hairs of the caterpillars come into contact with or penetrate in human skin
- Frequent accidental contacts with the pest may cause itchiness
- In contact with human skin the hairs of the caterpillar tend to break off and may cause allergic reactions expressed in form of highly irritating skin rashes
- Some people may also experience redness, swelling, inflammation of the throat, swelling on and the mucus membrane in the nose
- Inhaling clouds of hairs of the caterpillar can cause respiratory problems



## HEALTH PRECAUTION MEASURES

- Do Not touch or approach the pest (Hairy Caterpillar) and/or infested plants
- If you come across any infested plants with the "Hairy Caterpillar" please avoid going under the those bushes and/or trees
- Avoid walking and/or taking sun bathing under infested trees with "Hairy caterpillar"
- If a caterpillar is on your skin and/or fall on you, avoid brushing with your hand and/or use any available materials to shake it off and wash with water then apply sanitizer
- If you think you have been exposed with the hairs of the caterpillar it is advisable to rinse with running water, allow to air dry
- Remove all contaminated clothes and place in a laundry bag for laundry services

FOR ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT THE AGENCY ON:

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