



PROGRESS NOTED—Doug Gardner, of Gardner Contractors and Associates (standing) were in Hertford last week with plans and blueprints, making plans and progress on the courthouse annex. The annex will be built where the old jail, which was torn down recently once stood. (Sawyer Photo)



CAT TAILS DELIGHT — Out in Perquimans County, the cat tails thrive on the swampy waters. Women in the county send their husbands out to the waters to pick the cat tails for decorative fall scenes in the home. (Marren Photo)

New Pecan Trees Need Good Soil, Deep Hole

The family with the pecan trees will be the envy of the neighborhood as nuts begin to fall a few weeks from now, and the urge to plant trees will hit many Tar Heels who don't have them.

Don't get in too much of a hurry. Pecan trees can be planted any time during the dormant period. Late November into January is a good time to plant in much of the state.

North Carolina State University extension horticulturists suggest spending a little time in selecting the planting site. You'll need a site that drains well and one with fairly good soil. Avoid badly eroded hillsides.

Also, if you're planting near a house, buildings or power lines, remember that pecan

VA. BEACH GUESTS
Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Cullipher and family of Virginia Beach, Va. were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Preston Nixon on Sunday.

trees grow to very large size. There are several varieties commonly grown in North Carolina.

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Invasion By Gypsy Moth Inevitable

Invasion of North Carolina by the gypsy moth is apparently inevitable. However, when faced with the inevitable, the only solution is to prepare for it with all available resources. This is precisely what the entomology division of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture is attempting.

According to State Entomologist Al Elder, the 1973 efforts to thwart a premature infestation of the tree destroying creature, and prepare for its eventual intrusion into the state, corrective procedures have already gotten under way. These activities were begun in 1971 with survey traps designed to show when and where individual male moths were located in the state. It was determined by these trappings that the insects were hitchhiking in on vehicles, primarily campers, from areas known to have infestations in the Northeast.

Possible Infestation

In 1971 six moths were captured in five areas. In 1972 seven were found in seven areas. But in 1973 the situation changed, giving some indication of possible infestation in the northeastern corner of the state. Thirty-six males were trapped as of September 5 in 13 counties. These were scattered from the mountains to the coast with the majority appearing to be hitchhikers. But the situation in Currituck, Dare and Pasquotank counties is not so easily explained. Two were found in Pasquotank; five in Currituck and fourteen in Dare. Although this resort area is frequented by tourists from New England, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, where the heaviest infestations are, enough of the pests were caught to give probability of infestation.

Infestation would mean that both male and females are breeding in North Carolina. This is difficult to determine without finding a female moth or an egg mass. The female does not fly after emerging from the pupal stage.

Elder pointed out that the gypsy moth is destructive to most trees only during the larval or caterpillar stage. The egg mass, which is laid during the later summer, winters over and hatches caterpillars in early spring. When the creature reaches about finger-length it has the capability of consuming one square foot of leaves per day.

In heavily infested locales, thousands of acres can be stripped of all foliage in a very short period. More than two successive years of this can be fatal to the tree. In Pennsylvania this year 860,000 acres of forest have been completely defoliated. This can happen in North Carolina with a possibility of things being even worse due to a warmer climate, longer season, and an abundance of hardwoods and pines, both of which the gypsy moth feeds upon.

What's being done?

"Our biological control program has made great progress this year," Elder said. "Seven species of gypsy moth

parasites, all insects, have been released in areas from the mountains to the coast with special attention to areas where the moths have been trapped. Before frost over 50,000 parasites will have been placed in strategic areas."

These beneficial types of flies and tiny wasps attack the gypsy moth in several ways. Some parasitize the caterpillar, other destroy the pupae while another group strike directly at the egg masses. No counter gypsy moth insects are released until tests prove them safe to the environment. Neither are any of them harmful to man.

Theory holds that these enemies of the defoliating pest may establish themselves in North Carolina by living on other nonbeneficial species. They would then be ready to counterattack the invading gypsy moth when it arrives in force.

It is interesting to note that the moth is not native to North America. It was accidentally released here during the 1800's. It has no known beneficial qualities, few natural predators and no natural parasites.

Elder said the gypsy moth has several ways of entering the state. "Not only can he hitchhike, but weather and wind provide natural means of spread."

He requested that citizens cooperate with state and federal inspectors by reporting suspicious specimens. "Many," he said, "are already doing so." The egg masses are hairy and buff colored. The caterpillar is black with red and blue dots flanking the body. The adult male moth has feathered antenna, light brown in color with irregular marking on the wings, while the female moth is slightly larger, and lighter in color with a heavier body and does not fly.

Should Report Changes

If you're a student 18-22 getting monthly social security checks, it's important to report any changes in your earnings, school enrollment, or marital status.

About 650,000 students 18 and over get monthly social security payments because a parent gets disability or retirement benefits or has died. They can continue to get payments to age 22—slightly beyond for undergraduates—as long as

they remain full-time students and unmarried.

Students getting social security payments should notify social security immediately if they marry, leave school, or start attending on a part-time basis.

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DOES THE SIGN COUNT — If a would-be fisherman would decide to fish off this bridge leading into Hertford would he be arrested? That depends on if the fisherman would be standing on his head to read the sign which has been placed upside down. (Marren Photo)

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