



OUT OF THE WOODS

By Jim Stevens



Budworm

Here's the first of the 40-odd verses of an old song of Southern field hands:

"Oh, the boll weevil am a little black bug,
Come from Mexico, they say.
Now it's up all the way from Texas,

Jes' looking fer a place to stay—
Jes' lookin' fer a home,
Jes' lookin' fer a home."

Now the people of the woods in this big-timber country of ours are facing the spread of a menace not unlike that of the boll weevil in the South. Foresters are already calling the spruce budworm a more powerful threat to our forests than fire. The spruce budworm would be a true terror if it were not for that miracle of insecticides, DDT. The danger is requiring a vastly organized joint effort of foresters and entomologists backed by both government and industry and financed for aerial surveys that ran over 26,000 air miles last year, to set up effective defense against the spruce budworm.

And the effort must be built up more in 1951. It demands real money and many men.

Heliothis

In none of the proceedings and orations on the budworm that have come my way so far is there any mention of the vital fact that the beast is the larva of a diminutive noctuid moth that bears the family name of heliothis. All breeds of heliothis are tough babies. One chews tobacco in the raw, right off the bush. Our breed would no doubt take to snooze.

A story is already going the rounds of the camps that the Latin name originated in Walla Walla, where an ungodly swarm hatched out one night and blanketed the city like snow. Next morning the citizens were all asking each other, "What the heliothis?" So it was understood, the loggers tell. Plain speaking was impossible because a Walla Walla man would no more than open his mouth than moths would fly in, looking for a home.

"Oh, the budworm is a little

white moth,

Comes from Canada, they tell
It's come way out to Oregon,
Jes' lookin' for a place to dwell."

I'll rig a ballad up for Stan Borenson and his accordion, while I'm in the mood.

A Mighty Mean Moth

The budworm infested Pacific Northwest Douglas fir and White fir in 1944, this spreading to an alarming extent by 1948. The next year a cooperative survey by government and industry men showed that a total of 2,232,250 acres had been invaded by a deadly species of heliothis larvae a 56 per cent increase over 1948. This was apart from a 567,000 acres that were sprayed.

The epidemic is being held, as the 1950 spraying of a million acres reduced the acreage of infestation to a little over two million acres. Government and industry shared the year's cost of control—\$1,300,000. The fight must go on.

The spruce budworm, while in the caterpillar stage, is a gluttonous devourer of the leaves of the Douglas fir and White fir. When an epidemic loads a forest area the stripped trees starve to death—as trees feed through leaves on light and air.

Back east the tree-killing heliothis has made away with an estimated hundred billion board feet of timber in the past 40 years. In TREES, the USDA Yearbook of 1949, the grim story is told on Pages 423-427 by three top-notch entomologists. It pictures the spread of the spruce noctuid

from Quebec in 1909, through Maine, Ontario, the Lake States, the Rocky Mountains, on to the Pacific Northwest.

The Douglas fir, heretofore so resistant to all bugs and blights, bows to the budworm. Our defense is DDT spraying, which takes planes, men in considerable numbers and surveys to find infested forests. Back of all this must be public understanding and support. I'll keep you folks posted.

Wildcat Bagged By Timber Man

TIMBER — Leo Lolly of Portland is spending an indefinite time with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Walt Lolley.

Mr. Lopez is convalescing at the Jones hospital after a recent appendectomy.

Bill Tate bagged his first wild-

THE EAGLE, VERNONIA, ORE. THURSDAY, DEC. 21, 1950 3

cat last week while out target practicing.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Beyer and Connie of Warrenton spent Sunday with Mr. Beyer's parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Beyer.

A pink and blue shower was given at the Stewart Taylor home for Mrs. Pete Rover Saturday night. Invited guests were: Mr. and Mrs. Don Coleman, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Murphy, Mr. and Mrs. Russ Dunn, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Burleigh, Mrs. Emory Bailey, Pat Dunn, and Chet Beyer.

A bit of starch makes white gloves more resistant to smudges.

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