

# Leaf Insect Herbivore Identification Guide

Which critters have been feeding on the leaves in your woodland? Use the key to find out!

## Leaf webbers and rollers

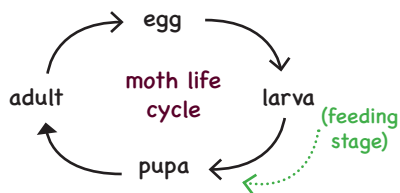


Leaf webbers glue together several leaves as they feed on them, even from separate branches!



Leaf rollers make their home by rolling up leaves as they feed.

The larvae (caterpillars) of both rollers and webbers develop in the leaf folds, before they pupate and emerge as mature adult moths.

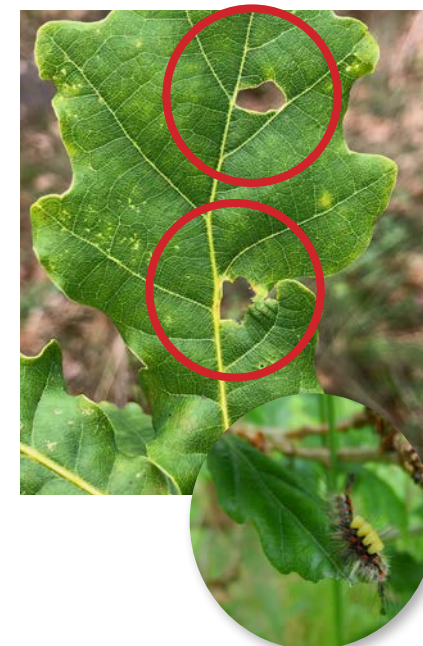


## Leaf skeletonisers



Leaf skeletonisers are grazing on the leaf, leaving only the leaf veins (leaf "skeleton") behind. Hold a leaf up to the light to see evidence of leaf skeletonisers.

## Leaf chewers



Leaf chewers are munching on the leaf itself, leaving holes behind!

## Activity ideas

The best time of year to observe leaf herbivory is from late spring onwards, from May to September. You'll see leaf galls of the autumn generation from late July onwards. Older children could create a collage of photos or ask them to draw their favourite galls or mines!

As a group activity, try a game where groups receive points for finding different types of herbivore damage on the trees at your site.

You could also compare the numbers or types of herbivores occurring on different species of tree. For instance, galls will be most abundant on oak trees, which support many species.

## Leaf miners

Leaf miners are species of moth, whose larvae develop inside mines in the leaf - eating the leaf from the inside out. Leaf mines come in all shapes and sizes! Later in the season, you might see "erupted" mines once the insect has left the mine.



Blotch mines on upper leaf surface



Serpentine mine on upper leaf surface



Erupted tent mine on the upper leaf surface



Lower leaf surface, showing the same mine

## Leaf galls



Oak spangle galls on the underside of a leaf

Leaf galls are tiny wasps that lay their eggs on leaves, which develop into structures called galls in which the caterpillars grow, before emerging as adult wasps. Most galls are have spring and autumn generations. The autumn generation galls tend to be larger, and are shown here.



Oak cherry gall wasp

## Bud and acorn galls

Galls can also develop on buds and acorns. Look out for a diversity of structures and colours!



Oak marble galls develop on oak buds. Look out for small exit holes where the wasp has left the gall!



Acorn knopper gall wasp develops on oak acorns. This is an invasive species