

IPM Case Study: Richmond Park

Context

Richmond Park is a 2500 acre deer park in south-west London managed by The Royal Parks Charity for the Crown. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserve and European Special Area of Conservation with approximately 6 million visitors annually. The site is a mix of wood pasture, open and enclosed woodland, grassland and ornamental gardens with cafes and car parks. The dominant tree species is oak and it is also internationally known for its population of veteran trees, of which 800 are oaks between 400-700 years old.

IPM Approach

OPM has been present on site since 2009 and actively managed using a combined approach of limited pesticide spraying, surveying and manual nest removal. This approach aims to minimise the impact of control measures on non-target biodiversity while also minimising the impact of the moth on human, animal and tree health. It is not possible to eradicate the moth from the site.

The Park is managed for OPM by implementation of a risk zone matrix, the highest risk areas are the ornamental gardens, cafes, car parks and areas around play grounds and park gates. The lowest risk areas are enclosed woodland closed to the public. The park is divided into 42 OPM survey areas and the risk zoning is cascaded down through these.

Due to its conservation designations spraying is kept to a minimum and takes place with annual consent from Natural England. Between 2-5% of the oaks are sprayed with *Bacillus thuringiensis* var *Kurstaki*-the biological insecticide with the lowest impact on non-target organisms of all the pesticides available to treat OPM. Areas targeted are the higher risk zone areas and those heavily infested the previous year.

During June trained volunteer surveyors survey their allocated area for infested trees, implementing the risk zone matrix. This creates a database of infested trees which is used to inform the deployment of up to four contractor manual nest removal teams in July and early August. Between 6000-8000 nests are removed annually.

Public awareness is encouraged using warning notices on all park noticeboards, larger notices on park gates during years of high infestation, information on The Royal Parks website and in the park information centre. There is active stakeholder and visitor engagement with the issue.