

Monterey sprayed to confuse moth

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Areas of California are being intensively sprayed with pheromones designed to create sexual confusion in a destructive moth.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and other agencies say that the spray poses no danger to animals other than the light brown apple moth, or to crops, people and gardens, the Los Angeles Times reports. The spray does not kill the moths but leaves the males unable to distinguish females of their species.

Spraying began on the scenic Monterey Peninsula this week and is also scheduled for Santa Cruz County, immediately to the north on the California coast.

Opponents to spraying include the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and officials in several cities. Many local residents have been rushing out to buy tarpaulins to cover their gardens and have been keeping pets inside, steps backers of the spraying say are not needed.

"The thing that upset me most was how paternalistic it was," Joni Hoffman of Seaside told the Times as she bought covers for her vegetable garden. "It was like, 'Well, thanks for living in a democracy, but we don't really care what you think.' "

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