

PARSLEYWORM

Also referred to as the Black swallowtail, Carrot Caterpillar, or Celeryworm.

by Eric Day and Alexandra Spring



Fig. 1: Caterpillar of Parsleyworm, Steven Katovich, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org

DESCRIPTION: Green with yellow and white spotted black band; up to 2 inches long. Two orange "horns" just behind the head are projected when the caterpillar is disturbed. This caterpillar is the larva of the black swallowtail butterfly.

COMMON HOST PLANT(S): Carrot, celery, parsley, dill and parsnip.

DAMAGE: Chews leaves and stems, destroys tops. Seldom numerous enough to reduce yield.

DISTRIBUTION: Throughout United States.

LIFECYCLE: After the black swallowtail butterfly emerges from its cocoon in the spring it deposits eggs on plants in the carrot family. This insect overwinters as pupa on the host

plant. There are two or more generations annually.

CULTURAL CONTROL: Handpicking these caterpillars is usually sufficient.

ORGANIC/BIOLOGICAL CONTROL: *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt, will work, but its results are not quickly observable. It is not necessary to wait before harvesting after an application of Bt.

CHEMICAL CONTROL: Treat with a registered insecticide if cultural control fails, follow all label instructions regarding wait period between application and harvest.