



SPOTTED LANTERNFLY

The spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) is a plant hopper native to Southeast Asia first detected in Pennsylvania in 2014. This destructive insect is a major pest of grapes and is threatening other important commercial fruit crops in North America such as peaches, apples, as well as timber. Since being discovered in Berks County, SLF has spread throughout southeastern PA along the DE border and is known to be in VA, making it a concerning sight for surrounding states.

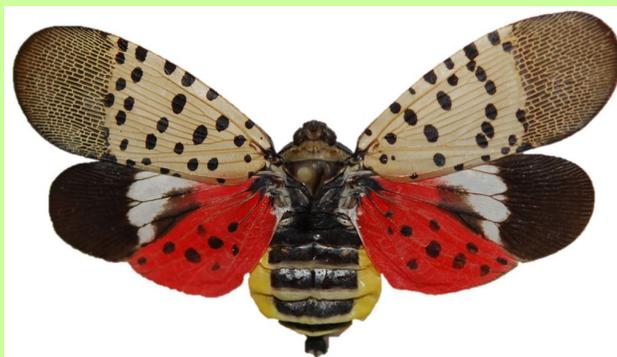
SLF use their syringe-like mouthparts to suck juices from the stems of over 65 different plant species, with many popular crops and ornamental plants on their menu. While feeding, SLF excrete a sugary substance known as honeydew which promotes the growth of mold. Mold from honeydew which lands on leaves and fruit can prevent photosynthesis and may cause fruit to be unmarketable.

SLF are recognizable insects in both their nymph and adult stages. Nymphs of the SLF begin hatching in late April, or springtime for DE. The small, wingless, black and white nymphs are present through the summer and develop bright red patches as they grow. Adults appear in mid-August with spotted grey forewings and bright red underwings. Their lifecycle cannot be completed without another invasive species, the tree-of-heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*. The relationship between SLF and TOH is fuzzy, with some research suggesting that the insect relies on the toxins this tree produces to make it unappetizing or even poisonous for predators. Therefore, SLF has to visit the tree at least once during its lifetime. This tree readily grows in urban and disturbed areas, making it available for the SLF almost anywhere.

Despite their striking appearance, SLF are great at hiding and can move to new areas without being noticed by riding inside of cars, trucks, or in crates of produce destined for market. Females will also lay camouflaged egg masses on trees, stones, yard furniture, or vehicles, and if these items are moved, nymphs will hatch and start a population in their new home.

A few SLF were sighted in Delaware during the late summer of 2017, but it is not yet known if these were "hitchhikers" from Pennsylvania, or if there is a reproducing population in our state! If you spot this invasive species, please contact your state department of agriculture.

For more information, or to report a sighting, please visit de.gov/hitchhikerbug or email hitchhikerbug@state.de.us



QUICK FACTS

- Plant hopper native to SE Asia
- Adults have spotted gray forewings and bright red underwings
- Require Tree-of-Heaven to complete life cycle
- Lay camouflaged egg masses
- Great at hiding and can move to new locations without being noticed
- Major pest of grapes and other commercial fruit crops
- Found throughout SE PA along the DE border

