



SPOTTED LANTERNFLY

Spotted lanternfly (SLF), *Lycorma delicatula*, is a non-native, invasive species originally from the southwest of Asia, specifically China. The species received its common name due to the black spots on their colorful red and gray-brown wings of the adults. It is also referred to as the hitchhiker bug due to the fact that they spread to different areas via human transportation. Attracted to more than 70 kinds of plants and trees including, fruit trees, grapevines, and black walnut, they pose a great risk to agricultural industry in Delaware.

On November 11, 2014, SLF was found in Berks County, Pennsylvania, over 10 thousand miles away from its home, marking the date as the first sighting of it in the US. Experts theorize that a handful originally arrived concealed in a shipment of stone from China. Since then SLF has spread to 11 different states and was officially recorded in New Castle County, Delaware in late summer of 2017.

SLFs congregate in large groups and use their syringe-like mouthparts to suck juices from the plant or tree. This feeding activity weakens the plant or tree and can significantly reduce their production of harvestable crops. Secondly, while feeding, SLFs expel a substance called honeydew which causes black mold to grow. Mold from honeydew lands on leaves and fruit and preventing 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. 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 egg masses can be hard to spot, making it easy to transport them on vehicles and other outdoor items.

SLF populations have recently been detected in Kent County and the Delaware Department of Agriculture has expanded the Spotted Lanternfly Quarantine. It is required of everyone moving within and out of the quarantine zones to inspect their vehicles and anything they may be transporting for all life stages of SLF. For more information, please visit de.gov/hitchhikerbug.

QUICK FACTS

- Plant hopper native to SE Asian
- Adults have spotted gray forewings and bring red underwings
- Nymphs are red and black with white spots
- 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
- Require Tree of Heaven to complete life cycle

