



## Have You Spotted a Spotted Lanternfly?

Despite its unique appearance, people sometimes confuse the spotted lanternfly with other insects. Here's how to know if you've seen a spotted lanternfly.



**Egg Mass:** Often looks like cracked mud



**Early Nymph:** Black with white spots

**Late Nymph:** Red with white spots and black stripes



**Adult:** Light brown front wings with black spots



**Adult:** Red back wings with black spots and black-and-white bands

## Favorite Hangout

One of the best places to look for a spotted lanternfly is on a tree of heaven. This tree's bark ranges from light brown to gray and has a cantaloupe-like texture. Its leaves are large, from 1 to 4 feet in length. They are made up of many smaller leaflets on both sides of a central stem.



Tree of Heaven



Tree of Heaven bark



Tree of Heaven leaves

## If You See Something, Say Something!

The spotted lanternfly is bad for our farms and forests. Visit [HungryPests.com](http://HungryPests.com) to see where it's been found. If you find this pest in a State known to have the spotted lanternfly, take a picture, note the location, and report it to your State department of agriculture before killing it. If you think you've found this pest in a new State, capture one (they won't hurt you), place it in a jar, and freeze it so your State agriculture officials can identify it.

## Is That a Spotted Lanternfly?

People sometimes mistake these colorful insects for the spotted lanternfly.



**Ailanthus Webworm Moth** (*Atteva aurea*)



**Tiger Moth** (*Arctia caja*)



**Red Milkweed Beetle** (*Tetraopes tetraphthalmus*)



**Cinnabar Moth** (*Tyria jacobaeae*)



**White-Lined Sphinx** (*Hyles lineata*)



**Ilia Underwing** (*Catocala ilia*)



**Boxelder Bug** (*Boisea trivittata*)



**Large Milkweed Bug** (*Oncopeltus fasciatus*)

Photo Credits: Spotted lanternfly and egg mass images courtesy of Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture; nymphs image by USDA; ilia underwing by Sturgis McKeever, Georgia Southern University, Bugwood; all others by Adobe Stock.

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# Pest Alert

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service  
Plant Protection and Quarantine

## Spotted Lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*)

The spotted lanternfly is an invasive pest, primarily known to feed on tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) but has many other host plants, including grape, hop, apple, stone fruit, maple, poplar, walnut, and willow. The insect changes hosts as it goes through its developmental stages. Nymphs feed on a wide range of plant species, while adults prefer to feed and lay eggs on tree of heaven (*A. altissima*). Spotted lanternflies are invasive and can spread rapidly when introduced to new areas. While the insect can walk, jump, or fly short distances, its long-distance spread is facilitated by people who move infested material or items containing egg masses. If allowed to spread in the United States, this pest could damage the country's grape, orchard, and logging industries.

### Distribution

The spotted lanternfly is present in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam. In 2014, the insect was first detected in the United States in Pennsylvania. Since then, spotted lanternfly infestations have been detected in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Virginia.

### Damage

Both nymphs and adults of spotted lanternfly cause damage when they feed, sucking sap from stems and branches. This can reduce photosynthesis, weaken the plant, and eventually contribute to the plant's death. In addition, feeding can cause the plant to ooze or weep, resulting in a fermented odor, and the insects themselves excrete large amounts of fluid (honeydew). These fluids promote mold growth and attract other insects.



Adult spotted lanternfly

### Description

Adult spotted lanternflies are about 1 inch long and one-half inch wide, and they have large and visually striking wings. Their forewings are light brown with black spots at the front and a speckled band at the rear. Their hind wings are scarlet with black spots at the front and white and black bars at the rear. Their abdomen is yellow with black bars. Nymphs in their early stages of development appear black with white spots and turn to a red phase before becoming adults. Egg masses are yellowish-brown in color, and most are covered with a gray, waxy coating prior to hatching.

### Life Cycle

The spotted lanternfly lays its eggs on smooth host plant surfaces and on non-host material, such as bricks, stones, and dead plants. Eggs hatch in the spring and early summer, and nymphs begin feeding on a wide range of host plants by sucking sap from young stems and branches. Adults appear in late July and tend to focus their feeding on tree of heaven (*A. altissima*) and grapevine (*Vitis vinifera*). As the adults feed, they excrete sticky, sugar-rich fluid (honeydew). The fluid can build up on plants and on the ground underneath infested plants, causing sooty mold to form.

## Where To Look

Spotted lanternfly adults and nymphs frequently gather in large numbers on host plants. They are easiest to spot at dusk or at night as they migrate up and down the trunk of the plant. During the day, they tend to cluster near the base of the plant if there is adequate cover or in the canopy, making them more difficult to see. Egg masses can be found on smooth surfaces on the trunks of host plants and on other smooth surfaces, including brick, stone, and dead plants.

## Report Your Findings

If you find an insect that you suspect is the spotted lanternfly, please contact your local Extension office or State Plant Regulatory Official to have the specimen identified properly.

To locate an Extension specialist near you, go to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) website at [nifa.usda.gov/Extension](https://nifa.usda.gov/Extension). A directory of State Plant Regulatory Officials is available on the National Plant Board website at [www.nationalplantboard.org/membership](https://www.nationalplantboard.org/membership).



Spotted lanternfly nymphs are black with white spots in early stages of development and turn red before becoming adults.



Covered and uncovered egg masses



Cluster of adults on the trunk of a tree at night