

## **Beware - The Spotted Lanternfly Has Arrived!**

An Asian plant hopper, better known as the spotted lanternfly, has been sighted in the United States and closer to home, in New Jersey. This invasive species has traveled all the way from East Asia and is a huge threat to our crops and trees.



The adult spotted lanternfly's appearance is vibrant and unique, with red and black spotted hind wings, gray and black spotted forewings, and a black head. This insect is about one inch in length and a half inch in width. They mate in the fall and over the winter they leave egg masses on smooth surfaces. The egg mass looks like a patch of mud. When they hatch around May, they are wingless and black with white dots on their backs.

These insects feed on more than seventy plant species, including cultivated grapes, fruit trees, hardwood trees, willows, maples, poplars and birch, their primary victim is the Tree of Heaven. These insects use their mouthparts to dig into plant tissues and suck out fluids, which promotes mold growth, making crops un-sellable. The spotted lanternfly's feeding habits also attract unwanted wasps, hornets, and ants that are drawn to the sugary fluids around the weeping wounds. Additionally, this invasive species can be harmful to domestic animals due to the toxic substance, Cantharidin, which is excreted from the Tree of Heaven when it is attacked.

Inspect your outdoor items such as firewood, paving stones, etc., for egg masses and if you discover any, scrape them into a double bag to throw away, or place them in bleach or alcohol. Questions? Call the Spotted Lanternfly Hotline at 1-833-223-2840.