

THE PURDUE LANDSCAPE REPORT

Issue: 18-06
May 8, 2018

What's as wide as your thumb, bright orange, and the latest threat to trees?

By: Elizabeth Barnes, barne175@purdue.edu

Spotted lanternfly is a nasty new pest that weakens plants, covers them with black mold, and can kill fruit trees, grapes, pines, and 70+ other species. It hasn't reached Indiana yet, but last fall it broke free of its quarantine and is on the move. Now is the time for you to learn how to recognize this pest, so you can report its presence and help any efforts to contain or eradicate this looming problem.

Where are they now? As of May 3rd, 2018, spotted lanternfly has been reported in isolated patches in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New York. You might think that means they're not a threat to Indiana, but last summer they had only been reported in Pennsylvania! The insects in New York and Delaware were probably accidentally transported there by humans. Any states that people or goods move between are at risk not just those neighboring the infestations.

Who should watch for them? Everyone should be watchful, but particularly people who: 1. buy products (like stone or Christmas trees) from infested states, 2. travel to or go camping in one of the infested states during egg laying season (the fall), or 3. own or live near fruit trees, grapes, and tree of heaven.

What do they look like? Spotted lanternfly's striking orange and black bodies and large size make them easy to recognize in the adult and nymph stages (figure 1 A, C, and D), but their eggs are well camouflaged (figure 1 B). Eggs are laid on everything from Christmas trees to stone slabs.

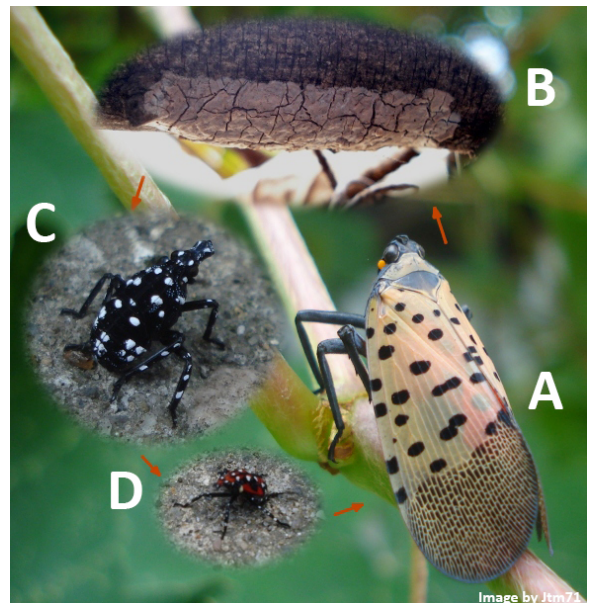


Figure 1. The life cycle of the spotted lanternfly (not to scale): A. Adult stage at rest, B. egg stage, C. 1st instar nymph, and D. fourth and final instar nymph.



Figure 2. A pinned spotted lanternfly specimen. The bright orange, yellow, and black patterns seen here are hidden while the insect is at rest but become prominent when it is in flight.



Figure 3. A large congregation of adult spotted lanternflies on a tree trunk in Pennsylvania.

What are the signs and symptoms? In the nymph and adult stages, these insects are large, brightly patterned (figure 2), and often congregate in large groups (Figure 3). In addition, they are messy feeders that pierce branches and trunks to suck on tree sap and drip their liquid excrement to the ground and bark.

Eventually this sap, called honeydew, becomes infested with a black sooty mold that coats everything under the tree.

What do I do if I see one? As with any invasive insect, if you think you've found one, catch or photograph it and report it. Catch nymphs and adults (don't worry, they don't bite!) and scrape off eggs, put them in a plastic bag, and place them all in the freezer. This action prevents them from spreading and the sample helps entomologists confirm your find. Once you've tried to catch or photograph it, report it by using [the GLEDN app](#), calling the Indiana DNR at (866) NO-EXOTIC, or emailing depp@dnr.IN.gov.

If you want to know more about spotted lanternfly or to receive training on how to report invasive insects, you can register for one of [three free workshops in southern Indiana](#) this May!

It is the policy of the Purdue University that all persons have equal opportunity and access to its educational programs, services, activities, and facilities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability or status as a veteran. Purdue is an Affirmative Action Institution. This material may be available in alternative formats. 1-888-EXT-INFO Disclaimer: Reference to products in this publication is not intended to be an endorsement to the exclusion of others which may have similar uses. Any person using products listed in this publication assumes full responsibility for their use in accordance with current directions of the manufacturer.

Purdue Landscape Report © Purdue University - www.purduelandscape-report.org