

Invasive of the Month

Spotted lantern fly: You can fight back

From Brodhead Watershed Association

With crops, jobs, and whole industries in Pennsylvania on their menu, spotted lantern flies are no joke.



Garden centers, nurseries, orchards, vineyards, tree farms, and many kinds of timber are at risk. And even people whose living doesn't depend on growing things are affected. The sticky "honeydew" they excrete while feeding is a hotbed for sooty mold — which can coat plants, decks, fences, even cars.

Unlike pests that mainly infest particular species — like woolly adelgid (hemlock), emerald ash borer (ash) and gypsy moth (oak) — spotted lantern flies aren't picky eaters. They feed on countless different plants. Though attracted to the invasive tree of heaven, they have a strong preference "for economically important plants," such as grapevines, maples, and black walnut, according to Penn State Extension.

The damage they do while feeding stresses the plants, undermines their health, and can kill them. And while sooty mold can be cleaned off your car and other surfaces, it keeps coming back as long as the lantern flies keep feeding.

"Stop this invader!" "Look before you leave!"

Spotted lantern flies have arrived in Monroe County. You've probably seen the warning signs at local preserves, with pictures of the adult insect and its various stages. Despite the huge pictures you see on signs, the adult is only about an inch long. And, despite their name, spotted lantern flies

are not strong fliers. A main way they move into new territory is when a mated female hitches a ride or lays eggs on your truck, which then hatch at your destination.

WHAT YOU CAN DO



1. Squash and scrape egg masses. Report sightings to Monroe County Conservation District at 570-629-3060. Squash the insects if you see them. Keep an eye out for egg masses on trees, siding, vehicles and any flat outdoor surface. Scrape off the egg masses and squash them, too.

2. Follow Department of Agriculture restrictions.

Monroe County is under quarantine to control the spread of spotted lantern fly. That means moving anything that could harbor the insect or its eggs out of the county is restricted, including: firewood and any tree parts, nursery stock, construction and landscape waste, packing materials such as pots, crates and pallets, outdoor household articles — even RVs, tractors and mowers, and vehicles not stored indoors.

For information:

www.agriculture.pa.gov/Plants_Land_Water/PlantIndustry/Entomology/spotted_lanternfly/quarantine/Pages/default.aspx
and

<https://extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly>