

Spotted Lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) – Catherine Carney-Feldman

Background: Native to China and first detected in Pennsylvania in September 2014. They are a true insect and go through 4 stages including a metamorphosis into the flying insect we call the Spotted Lanternfly. Adults emerge at the end of August. They can spread up to 7 miles per year.

Habitat: The SLF is an edge species and does not do well in deep forests.

Threat: Feeds on a wide range of fruit, ornamental and woody trees. Prefers in particular, Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) and then red maple, (*Acer rubrum*) as hosts. Loves grape vines and fruit trees although seldom is found on pear trees.

How they feed: SLF feeds on the plant sap of many different plants including grapevines, maples, black walnut, other important native trees and the invasive tree-of-heaven.

How they spread: This invasive species can be spread long distance by people who move infested material or items containing egg masses. In their second stage they walk constantly. In the fourth stage, they fly.

*****NOTE: This year it is imperative when ordering from a distant landscape company or picking up from local landscaping companies, to examine upon receipt, evidence of egg masses on the wooden parts of the product in the early spring, and the crawling insect (second stage) in shipments after May.**

Egg masses: Look similar to the gypsy moth. They also have ‘honey do’ (bug poop), that will rain down from trees. They can be scraped off and put into a jar of alcohol or at least, stomped on.

Danger: If allowed to spread in the United States, this invasive pest could seriously impact the country’s grape, orchard and logging industries.

Natural Predators: The assassin bug will feed on the SLF throughout all four stages of their life cycle. Spiders will eat them early in the first three stages. Some native birds will pick at them in their flying stage. Yellow jackets will eat their dead bodies.

Remedies: At this time there is no know remedy. Neonics, (neonicotinoid - a systemic chemical insecticide), might be useful and a paper is coming out on this subject soon. Chemicals can be used for a targeted tree **but will affect and kill other non- intended necessary and useful insects. One can use bands on trees to keep the insect in its crawling stage from reaching the canopy. However, a cage around the sticky band must be used to keep birds and bats and non-intended species from getting caught.**

*****The good news:** On the whole, this pest will not kill a healthy tree although it will affect how its canopy will look.

Management guide for insects: See Penn State Extension (see website below).

Last word: This is a chronic problem that we will not be able to get rid of, but will have to learn to live with.

For future reference and details go to the PennState Extension Spotted Lanternfly website:
www.extension.psu.edu

