

HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

A guide to the invasive insect; Spotted Lanternfly

Rebekka Horn, Graduate Research Assistant, University of Tennessee
Midhula Gireesh, Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee



Picture credit: Rebekka Horn, University of Tennessee

01. What is SLF?

Spotted Lanternflies (SLF) are a newly invasive insect to the state of Tennessee. These insects feed on the sap of trees via piercing sucking mouthparts. SLF are known to feed on over 103 plants, preferring the following: tree of heaven, black walnut, birch, silver maple, willow, grapes, etc. In large numbers, SLF can cause significant damage to plants. Keep reading to learn about the life stages of SLF.

A. Egg Masses

SLF lay eggs on multiple surfaces - outdoor furniture, rooftops, electrical poles, cars, plants, tree bark, etc. Egg masses take on the appearance of a mud patch and are grayish brown in color; seen below. This waxy coating over the egg mass protects them through the harsh winter months. The waxy coating cracks as it ages, and can expose the egg masses.



Picture credit: Rebekka Horn, University of Tennessee

B. Nymphs



Picture credits: Rebekka Horn, University of Tennessee

- Nymphs hatch in early spring between March-April. First, second, and third instar nymphs are black with white spots, often mistaken for ticks.
- Fourth instar nymphs are more noticeable due to their red coloration with black and white spots. Fourth instar nymphs indicate that adults will hatch soon, and are seen in late summer between August-early October.

C. Adults

- Adults emerge late summer, mate, and begin laying eggs September-December.
- SLF adults have tan front wings with black spots and red hind wings with black bars and spots. Female SLF are larger than males, and are identified by the red area on the tip of the abdomen.
- Adult males and nymphs secrete honeydew (a sugary substance), which encourages the growth of sooty mold. In turn, sooty mold weakens parts of the tree it grows on.



Picture credits: Rebekka Horn, University of Tennessee

D. How can YOU help?

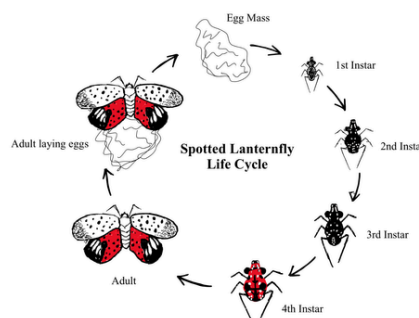


Illustration credit: Rebekka Horn, University of Tennessee

- Long story short: **take a picture** of the egg mass, nymph, and or adult and **smashing it** is the first step you should take.
- “Where should I report it?” you may ask?
- Please go to **ReportAPest** on **tn.gov** and fill out the intake form. The website will ask you for your contact information (in case they need to contact you for more information) and the sighting description.