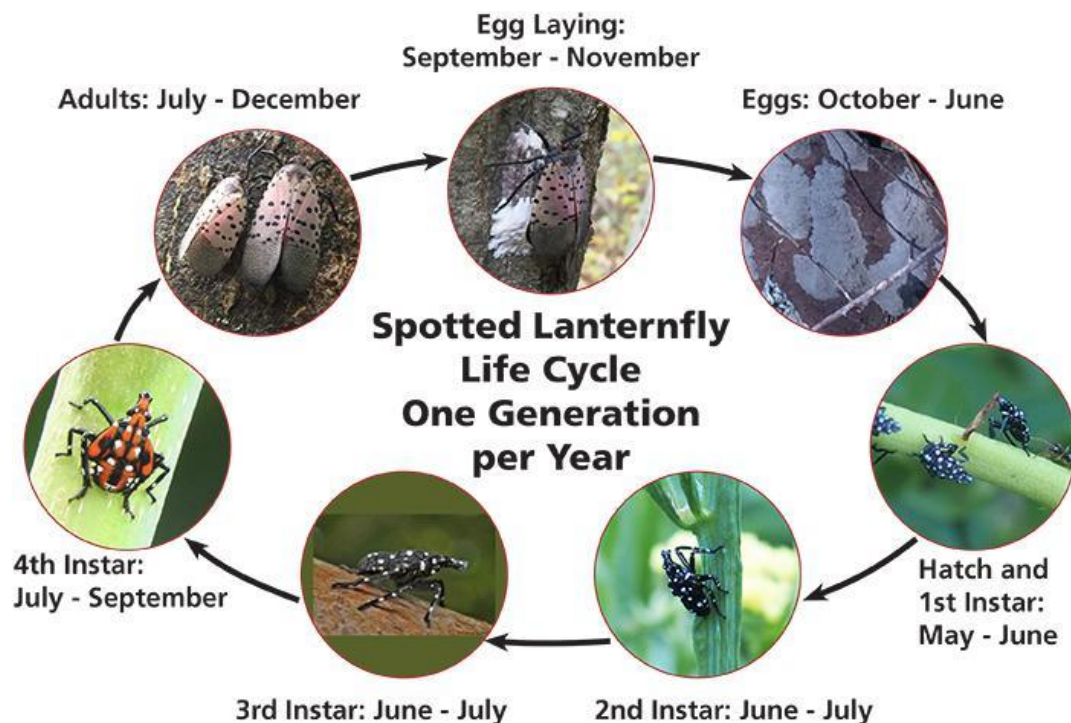


Spotted Lanternfly Resource Guide

Feeding Damage

SLF don't bite, sting or have any venom. Any effects on plants are caused by sucking sugars from host plants and leaving behind large amounts of honeydew. While SLF feeding is a plant stressor, it is currently considered to be primarily a nuisance pest in residential landscapes. A few plant exceptions include grapevines, tree-of-heaven, and some tree saplings.

Learn to Identify SLF in All its Stages



EGGS: Laid in the fall, often on tree trunks, have a grey mud-like covering which can take on a dry cracked appearance. They overwinter as eggs so scraping them off can help to reduce populations in the next season.

NYMPH stage: Nymphs emerge in May, having four development stages (instars). Nymphs do not fly but move about to find food sources, preferring tender new growth on vegetable, fruit and herb plants. Damage is seen only when plants are subject to very high SLF populations.

ADULTS: Adults prefer woodier plant species (trees, vines) and feed on more than 80 varieties of fruit, ornamental and woody trees. Adults often choose a favorite or "hot" tree on which to gather and feed in large numbers for several weeks. Damage can vary greatly by host species, but in general damage is more likely to be apparent if the plant is already stressed by other factors.

Once Identified, What Should You Do in Your Yard?

Regular monitoring of high-value plants is strongly recommended. Just because you have seen SLF don't assume that all plant damage you see is caused by SLF. Remember, other factors can cause plant health decline, including other insects, diseases and weather conditions.

Before taking any action ask yourself some questions: What is the extent of the population – an infestation or merely one or several insects? What plant species is affected? Have I seen it here before? Are there other similar plants in the immediate area and are they affected?

Because populations can vary unpredictably from year to year, there is no “one size fits all” solution. However, there are [a number of non-pesticide alternatives](#) which will help to manage SLF and at the same time will protect pollinators, beneficial insects, wildlife and water resources.

The Tree of Heaven Connection

One of the favorite host plants for SLF is the tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), an invasive plant common in landscapes and disturbed areas. This tree can be mistaken for other species including black walnut, hickory, and staghorn sumac.

[Tree-of-Heaven ID \(ct.gov\)](#)

Because tree-of-heaven (TOH) exists in male and female forms, one management technique used by professionals is to eliminate the female trees and then use existing male trees to act as a trap for SLF. However, as a homeowner, you will probably want to eliminate any TOH you find on your property by consulting with a professional arborist.

Are SLF a Threat to Agriculture?

Some of the plants that are particularly favored by SLF are grapes, hops, apples, stone fruit, and silver maple. While spotted lanternflies do not directly kill plants, they can threaten crops and fruit production by feeding on a plant's sap. As always, damage would depend on many factors. Experience has shown that populations often move on after a season or two.

Grape vines are a plant of special agricultural and commercial concern. SLF will weaken the plants and reduce sugar content of the grapes. Vineyard owners will have to be especially observant for early detection.

It is interesting that one Pennsylvania vineyard owner who experienced an infestation of SLF reported that populations declined over subsequent years and that his biggest concern for his crop isn't spotted lanternflies. What concerns him the most is near-by farms which spray clouds of noxious plant growth regulators, [like Dicamba; 2,4-d; or Triclopyr](#), putting at risk his grapes and other crops that aren't genetically modified.

Quarantine Issued for Connecticut

As previously mentioned, SLF are inefficient flyers but are great hitchhikers, attaching themselves to many solid surfaces including vehicle parts. To prevent spread to new areas many affected states, including Connecticut, have enacted quarantine orders for businesses which transport items (agriculture equipment, nursery plants, outdoor construction equipment, etc.) from known infected areas to be inspected and SLF destroyed before shipment. For the homeowner, the state recommends that **people be careful when traveling by inspecting their clothes, vehicles, camping equipment, etc. for “stowaways” prior to travel from a quarantined area.**

A good [checklist](#) for travelers, so you don't bring them home with you.

Additional Resources

[Spotted Lanternfly Factsheet](#)

[Spotted Lanternfly Factsheet Spanish](#)

[Spotted Lanternfly Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Spotted Lanternfly Frequently Asked Questions Spanish](#)

[Spotted Lanternfly Lookalikes Poster](#)