PEST ALERT!

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY

Lycorma delicatula

WHERE

EVERYWHERE AS NYMPHS, ON WOODY PLANT PARTS LIKE STEMS, VINES, AND TREE TRUNKS AS ADULTS

I’m what’s known as an ‘invasive species.’ I first traveled from my native Asia to the northeastern US in 2012. I arrived in NYC in 2020 and have been here ever since!

I first emerge as a nymph in May. When I’m young, I eat just about anything—even your vegetable plants. I’m harder to notice this time when I’m small and can’t yet fly.

HOW

BY STEALING NUTRIENTS

As an adult, I feed by piercing the bark of trees and vines and feasting on their sap. In the process, I produce and secrete honeydew. This coating attracts my good friend sooty mold. They get a bad rap, cause they look gross. But they don’t actually hurt trees too much.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

• Vacuuming is the best way to minimize the impact of spotted lanternfly in your NYC garden. Regular (once or more per week) passes will help to keep them at bay.

• Find and remove egg sacs throughout season—especially in the fall—to help prevent overwintering.

• There are some organic sprays that scientists are currently testing and believe will help to control bad infestations in agricultural contexts. But it DOES NOT APPEAR THAT NEEM OR INSECTICIDAL SOAP HAVE MUCH OF AN IMPACT on spotted lanternfly.

PLANTS TO WATCH

• Nymphs (young spotted lanternflies) are generalists and can often be found on ANY AND ALL ANNUAL VEGETABLES.

• Adults favorite plant is TREE OF HEAVEN (Ailanthus altissima). GRAPE VINES appear to be a close second. And they can be found on more than 50 other woody plants including PEACH, PLUM, AND MAPLE TREES.