

Questions and Answers about the Spotted Lanternfly



Where did the Spotted Lanternfly come from?

Native to Asia, Spotted Lanternflies were accidentally introduced into Pennsylvania in 2014. In 2018, they crossed the Delaware River into three New Jersey counties – Mercer, Hunterdon and Warren - and have spread to several other counties since then.

How do Spotted Lanternflies affect trees?

The mouth parts of Spotted Lanternflies act like long straws, able to pierce plant tissues and suck out the sap. The loss of sap can weaken infested trees and plants.

Lanternflies are a threat to many hardwood and fruit trees in Lambertville. They are known to feed on willow, black walnut, maple and birch trees as well as on apple, peach and cherry trees, grape vines, basil plants, and vegetables.

How can Spotted Lanternflies be controlled?

Trees can be treated to resist Lanternflies but homeowners can kill them to control an infestation. You can try swatting them but they are quicker than a house fly in hopping away. It is easier to scoop them up from the tree trunk one by one in a milk container or can. Just add ammonia or alcohol to kill them.

You can also scoop up egg masses after they have been created in the fall. Egg masses resemble grayish-brown splotches of mud. Aside from the Tree of Heaven, eggs can be found upon any smooth trunked tree, stone or vertical smooth surface including manmade items like vehicles, campers, yard furniture, barbeque grills, trash

cans or any other items stored outside. If you find egg masses, you can scrape them off, bag them and toss them in the trash. Eggs can also be killed by bleach, alcohol or hand sanitizers. Lanternfly eggs can survive winter's freezing temperatures and hatch in the spring.

If you have a Tree of Heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*, another introduced invasive species on your property, you should remove it - see photo at right. The Tree of Heaven is the favorite food source for Lanternflies. The trees look very similar to native sumac trees so be sure to correctly identify the tree specie. Many of the Trees of Heaven once lined the D&R Canal in Lambertville but were removed by the NJ State Park Service in January, 2021.



To learn more about Spotted Lanternflies, go to:

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/pi/prog/spottedlanternfly.html>

<http://treephilly.org/resources/invasive-pests/spotted-lanternfly/>

Sources: New Jersey Conservation Foundation and City of Philadelphia Parks and Recreation.