



Pest Alert: Spotted Lanternfly Identification and Reporting in Virginia

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Introduction

The Spotted Lanternfly (SLF), *Lycorma delicatula*, was detected in Winchester, Virginia in 2018. It has spread and is now found in multiple locations in Virginia. It is important to report new finds of this pest to your local Cooperative Extension Office.

Life stages

SLF has three distinct stages: nymphal, adult, and egg. There is one generation per year.

Nymph

SLF molts four times during the nymphal stage. These molts are called instars. The young 1st-3rd instars are black with white spots (Figs. 1 & 2). The mature 4th instars are red, black, and white (Fig. 3). Nymphs measure 4-16 mm (3/16-5/8 inch) long and are found from late April to mid-summer.



Figure 1. Side view of SLF nymph showing the head projection (Eric Day, Virginia Tech).



Figure 2. The 1st to 3rd instars are black with white spots (Eric Day, Virginia Tech).



Figure 3. The 4th instar nymphs are red and black with white spots (Eric Day, Virginia Tech).

Adult

Adult SLF measure about 25 mm (1 inch) long with wings folded and about 38 mm (1 1/2 inch) wide with the wings expanded. Adult SLF have black spots on the front part of the wing and a broken-line pattern at the tip (Fig. 4). When the wings are expanded, the red, black, and white colors of the hind wings are visible (Fig. 5). Adult SLF are found from mid-July to November.



Figure 4. Adult SLF in resting position (Eric Day, Virginia Tech).



Figure 5. Adult SLF with wings spread (Eric Day, Virginia Tech).

Egg

Eggs are laid in masses that are usually covered with a protective material. The covering is shiny when fresh, but later dries to a flat gray color (Fig. 6). As the material ages, it turns tan, develops cracks, and may fall off (Fig. 7). Egg masses range from 25-40 mm (1 to 1 1/2 inch) in size. Most eggs are covered but exposed eggs can be found (Fig. 6). Egg masses can be singly or in clusters. Egg masses are found most easily in the winter and nymphs begin hatching in April.



Figure 6. Freshly laid egg masses and exposed eggs (Eric Day, Virginia Tech).

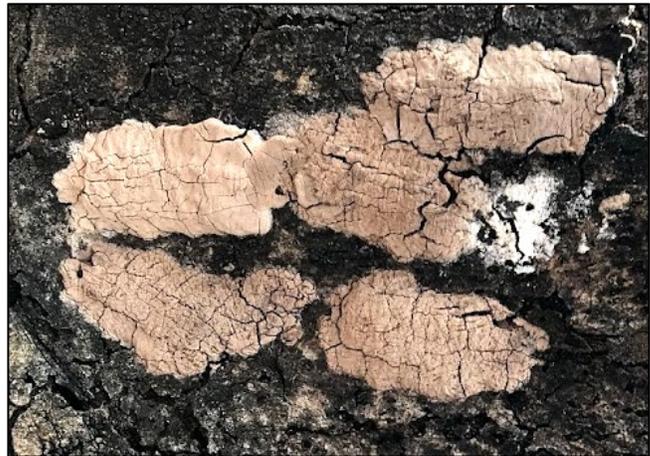


Figure 7. Weathered egg masses (Eric Day, Virginia Tech).

Reporting

If you suspect you have found SLF for the first time in your location, take a picture or collect it. Be sure to note the street address or location it was found and contact your [local Cooperative Extension Office](#). Your information helps Cooperative Extension track the spread of this invasive pest in Virginia.

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2022

ENTO-265NP (ENTO-513NP)