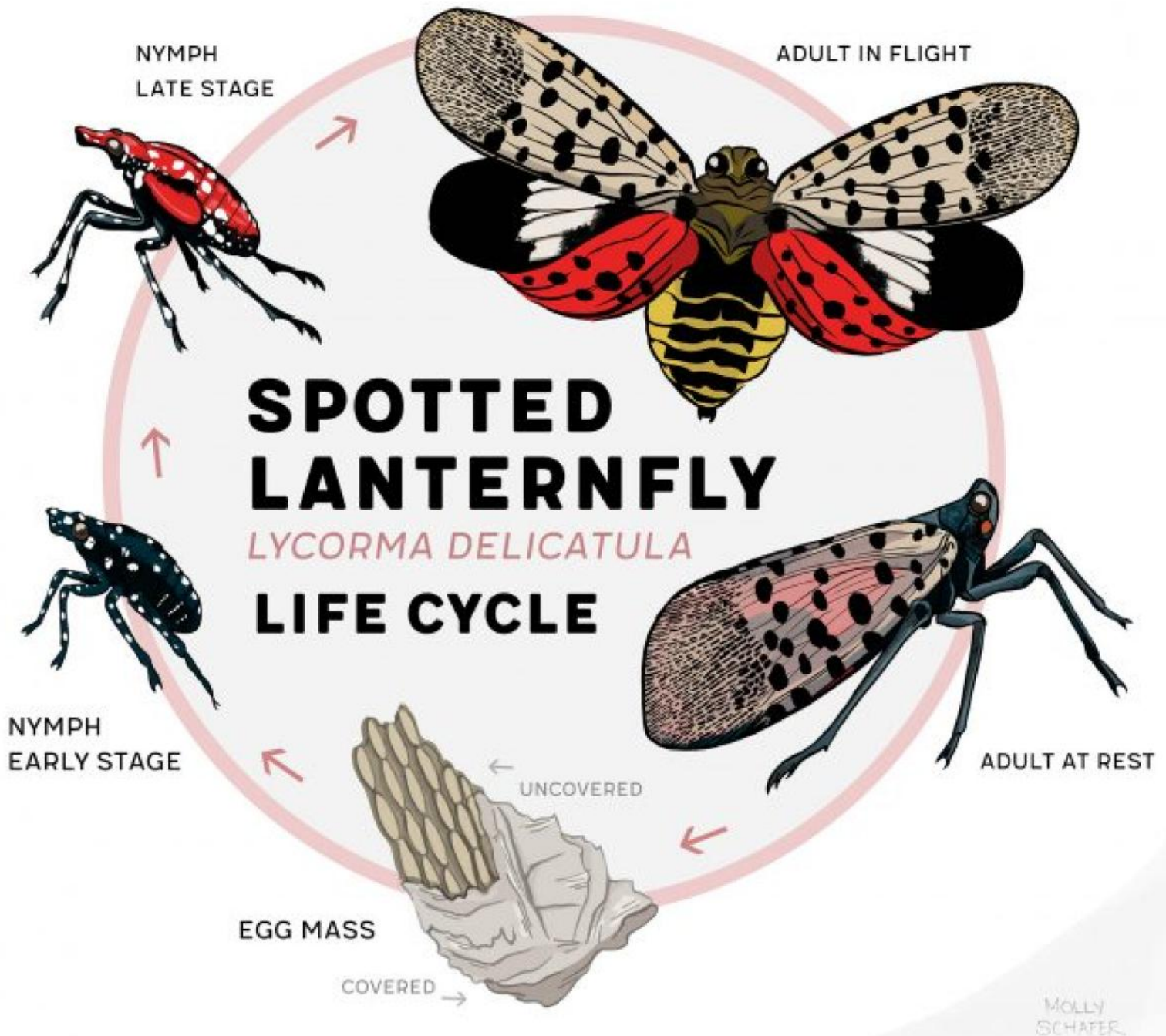


Ways to Fight the Spotted Lanternfly

News Release Date
07-05-2022



It appears this year that the non-native, invasive Spotted Lanternfly has become established in Montgomery and surrounding towns. According to Rutgers Entomology Professor Dr. George

Hamilton, this is [bad news for trees and other plants](#). This large leaf hopper-type insect lives on the sap of many species and literally sucks the life out of them. It also leaves behind a sticky residue known as 'honeydew' that attracts more insects, creates destructive sooty mold, and causes staining. But, more bad news would come from the indiscriminate use of pesticides against lanternflies, which can harm beneficial insects, fish, birds, mammals, and even our pets and ourselves if not properly applied. Refer to the video link above or get advice from a local garden store on the application of pesticides, or use a professional pest management company to address this issue in a safe, targeted manner.

Or better yet, consider using the following DIY natural ways to battle the lanternflies:

1. Control the Tree of Heaven

The main tree that spotted lanternflies are attracted to is the [tree of heaven](#) (Ailanthus Altissima). Chopping these aggressively invasive trees down can help deal with current problems and reduce the possibility of future infestations.

These trees grow rapidly to a height of up to 8 feet in the first year. Agricultural authorities in states where lantern infestations are prevalent recommend reducing these invasive trees.

Spraying the stumps with full-strength (undiluted) herbicide to prevent the trees from resprouting.

2. Vinegar

Vinegar kills spotted lanternflies on contact. Although you can dilute apple cider or white household vinegar, it is more effective when you spray it raw, directly onto nymphs and adults. Only spray vinegar on/near weeds you do not care about, because vinegar may also harm the underlying plant.

3. Insecticidal Soap

A solution of insecticidal soap can be sprayed directly on the adults or on the nymphs.

Misting plants, shrubs, and trees with this solution where there is evidence of infestation is an effective way of killing adult lanternflies or nymphs over a wide surface area.

Alternatively, mix insecticidal soap with apple cider vinegar in a mason jar and hang it in or near infested trees and plants. This will help to attract catch and kill the flies.

4. Vacuum Them

Another easy and inexpensive natural way of ridding the garden or outside of the house of these unwanted insects is to simply vacuum the nymphs up and dispose of them.

5. Soap and Water

A homemade lantern fly spray made of liquid soap and water is another simple way to kill lanternflies. Dawn or related brand dish soap works fine.

Combine 1/4 cup liquid soap to a quart of water plus a tablespoon of vegetable oil in a spray bottle. Use it to spray SLF. The soapy water will suffocate and kill them.

6. Neem Oil

Neem oil, a natural fungicide and pesticide derived from the seeds of the Neem tree, becomes active when lantern bugs and other insects ingest the substance.

However, neem oil does not kill spotted lanternfly nymphs or adults immediately as the process takes some time to inhibit the eating abilities of the pests. They will be unable to feed though and eventually die.

Many commercially available products contain Neem oil to use as a spray right away. Alternatively, you can make a DIY solution.

A simple homemade spotted lanternfly spray recipe is 4 teaspoons of neem oil combined with 2 teaspoons of liquid soap and a gallon of water. Spray the critters directly.

7. Sticky Wraps

These pests only crawl upward on the bark of trees and only jump or fly down. Therefore, they can be trapped (see below) as they climb up trees. You can also control nymphs as they start their journeys up to foliage by banding trees with sticky wraps. However, be sure to cover the wide sticky tape with chicken wire or preferably fiberglass or plastic mesh or window screen, to prevent birds, bats, bees, and butterflies from getting stuck on it and dying. Purchase sticky bands at your local garden or hardware store.

View an instructional video on [How to use sticky Wraps](#).

8. Diatomaceous Earth

Diatomaceous earth kills many bugs and insects by way of dehydration. When the pests come in contact with it, it slowly dries them out.

You can buy a plastic accordion dusting canister for around \$15 online. Or make a spray by combining 4 tablespoons of DE with a gallon of water. Shake well and use it to spray lanternflies.

You can purchase high-quality DE online or at most garden stores.

9. DIY Circle Trap

Make a homemade lantern fly trap of netting, a funnel, and a plastic bag. For the funnel, you can use the top of a plastic milk jug.

Wrap the netting around the tree and staple it. Next, attach the funnel at one end of the netting. The nymphs will then crawl up the other end of the netting and into the funnel which leads to the plastic bag.

For instructional videos visit, [How to make Circle Trap](#) (using milk jug tops) or **Bag Circle Trap for Spotted Lanternflies: How to Set Up Bag Circle Trap for Spotted Lanternflies: How to Set Up**[How to set a Bag Circle Trap](#).**Bag Circle Trap for Spotted Lanternflies: How to Set Up****Bag Circle Trap for Spotted Lanternflies: How to Set Up****Bag Circle Trap for Spotted Lanternflies: How to Set Up**

10. Milkweed Bait

Milkweed is a wildflower that attracts spotted lanternflies. The insects then feed on the sap which later poisons and kills them.

Those that don't die immediately will be slow in movement. As a result, they will be left vulnerable to predators, or you can pick them off and crush them.

11. Scrape Off the Eggs (in the Fall/Winter)

The life cycle of the spotted lanternfly (SLF) begins around September when the females lay 30-60 eggs which will overwinter unless destroyed.

These appear as grayish muddy-looking accretions on bark, plant stems, garden furniture, walls, cement, and other hard surfaces.

To get rid of spotted lanternfly eggs, use a scraper or any other flat-edged tool to scrape them off. You can then put them in a bag and dispose of the bag, preferably by burning it.

This is a laborious but free method that is effective in preventing a later infestation.

Related Links

- [NJ Dept. of Agriculture Spotted Lanternfly Info](#)