

(revision date:5/22/2014)

Common Insects & Mites : Brown marmorated stink bug

Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.

Biology

The brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) is an introduced pest species from Asia that is spreading quickly across the United States. Nymphs and adults feed on a wide variety of plant hosts. BMSB prefers to feed on fruit, seeds, and seed pods, but will also feed on stems and leaves of some hosts. Both adults and nymphs have piercing-sucking mouthparts and inject digestive enzymes into plant tissues to aid in feeding. Sunken areas and deformities are typical symptoms on fruits and vegetables. Damaged areas are discolored beneath the fruit's skin and become hard and pithy or corky in texture. Known host plants of BMSB include apple, pear, stone fruits (peach, plum, cherry, etc.), berries, corn, tomatoes, beans, squash and melon, pepper, and eggplant. Landscape plants such as maple, magnolia, butterfly bush, holly, mountain ash, and flowering cherry and plum are also hosts to BMSB. One or two generations of BMSB per year are expected in the Pacific Northwest. Adults overwinter in sheltered locations (including houses, where they can become a significant nuisance pest). In the spring, light green to white eggs are laid in groups of about 20 to 30 on the underside of leaves. Young stink bugs, or nymphs, are black with a red-and-black striped abdomen. Nymphs often feed in groups when young. Older nymphs are dark with white bands on body, legs, and antennae. They may feed in groups or singly. Adults are a little over 1/2 inch long, with a shield-shaped body. Body color on adults is mottled gray and brown, while the legs and antennae have alternating dark and light bands. The abdomen also has dark and light bands which are visible at the edge of the wings. NOTE: BMSB adults closely resemble other stink bugs found in WA and OR. For more information on BMSB identification, see FS079E, Pest Watch: Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, available at <https://pubs.wsu.edu/>.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Pick and destroy BMSB egg masses or groups of young nymphs. While hand-picking adults may be somewhat effective in small gardens, manual control may not be very successful due to the wide host range and large numbers of BMSB in some areas. Catching adults and nymphs can be facilitated through net-sweeping, plant vacuuming or shaking the infested plant over a drop cloth.
- ~ Some natural enemies feed on BMSB, including domestic chickens, praying mantids, and other predaceous insects. While natural enemies may not be sufficient to provide complete control, avoid use of broad-spectrum insecticides which would harm populations of beneficial insects.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides

Refer to specific host fact sheets for application timing and registered pesticide products.

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Images



~ Caption: Adult brown marmorated stink bug
~ Photo by: D.R. Lance, USDA-APHIS