

Western Conifer Seed Bug



DAMAGE



The western conifer seed bug feeds on developing cones and seeds of several species of pines. This feeding damage does not harm the tree, but reduced seed production may

result from heavy infestations. This is not usually a concern for the homeowner. They do not cause damage to the household; they do not bite, infest the pantry or eat fabrics or wood. They are a nuisance insect. The western conifer seed bug overwinters in the adult form. At the onset of cooler temperatures in the fall, they seek out buildings and other protected sites to spend the winter. These insects do not bite humans and are not considered a major pest in Michigan. They have been prevalent in Michigan since 1987.

IDENTIFICATION

The adult western conifer seed bug is a highly conspicuous insect that will take flight readily. It makes a distinctive buzzing noise when disturbed. It is similar in shape and appearance to the box elder bug. The most distinguishing characteristic of the adult is the hind leg; it is

wide, flat and leaf-like. The insect is 3/4" in length and has a white zigzag line on the forward portion of its back. They range in color from reddish-brown to gray black. When crushed, these insects often smell of the pine on which they feed.

ECOLOGY AND LIFE HISTORY

Western Conifer seed bugs are occasional pests of pine plantations in the South. Their only impact is on seed production. Little is known about the life history of this insect other than that they feed on developing pine seeds. A single generation occurs each year in Michigan.



CONTROL

No chemical control is necessary. Destroy and remove them from the premises when encountered. Their only interest in your dwelling is a place to take a winter nap. They do not reproduce in the house or cause damage. Sealing cracks and other small openings will help to prevent the insects from entering the home.

Would you like additional information?

Additional information is available on-line. Please see [MSU Extension-Oakland County's publications](#) as well as [MSU Extension's Bulletin Office](#) on campus.

Contact our [Plant & Pest Hotline](#) (248/858-0902) for assistance with plant identification, pests and diseases, weeds, trees and shrubs, lawn, flowers, fruits, vegetables, grasses and groundcovers, native plants, plant propagation, and many other gardening topics.