

I found this portion of an article from Kristy Stultz very informative on seeing the difference between invasive Spotted Lanternfly egg cases and other native insect egg cases. Please check before you accidentally destroy the beneficial insects that we need to keep the other insects in check 😊



Weekly Review for April 19, 2023

This informal report by the Division of Entomology & Plant Pathology is a commentary on insects, diseases, and curiosities division staff encounter on a week-to-week basis. Comments and questions about this report are welcome and can be sent to your respective Inspector.

Kristy Stultz (Nursery Inspector & Compliance Officer) - KStultz@dnr.IN.gov

With Indiana now having two known spotted lanternfly (SLF) populations, there has been a lot of discussion about egg mass scraping in an effort to reduce populations. But before you can scrape an egg mass, you need to know what it looks like.

Spotted lanternfly egg masses can be laid on just about any surface. The females look for protected and out of the way surfaces to lay them. Each egg mass contains up to 50 eggs. They are typically oblong about 1-inch long and one-half inch wide. Again, they may be longer or shorter, thinner or wider depending on the number of eggs under the protective coating. They can look like a smear of mud or splash of concrete mix; usually light gray in color and smooth in appearance though as they age, cracks will appear in the coating. Egg masses can be visible year-round since even after hatch, there will be egg casings and some coating left behind. New egg masses are laid in late September through the first freeze and will not hatch until the following spring, typically in May.



Photo 6 – Spotted lanternfly egg masses can be highly variable – note the partially uncovered eggs in the middle photo.

There are several other insect egg masses that may be confused with spotted lanternfly. Spongey moth egg masses are roughly the same size and can be laid on just about any surface. They will be light tan or buff in color and have a hairy or cotton-ball like texture. Like SLF, spongy moth overwinters in the egg mass.



Photo 7 – Spongy moth egg masses – note the pupal case in the upper left photo

We've gotten lots of folks asking about praying mantis egg cases. Also known as oothecae, they can be similar in shape and size. Praying mantis egg cases look a little bit like foam and are glued primarily around twigs. They are variable in size and shape depending on which species of praying mantis laid the egg mass.



Photo 8 – Praying mantis egg cases from two different species – Chinese mantis (left), Carolina mantis (right)

If in doubt, send a picture to DEPP@dnr.IN.gov. Include your name, contact information and the location where the photo was taken. We're happy to help you figure out what you've got. If you think you've spotted SLF, we definitely want to know of possible new populations.