

A Bug's Life

Chinese praying mantis

Tenodera sinensis

Fun facts

- Widespread, non-native and largest species in North America
- Frothy egg case (ootheca) stuck to garden vegetation and objects in landscape to overwinter
- Hundreds of nymphs emerge from ootheca in spring
- One generation per year, adults die before winter



Identification

Very large mantis, between 4-5" long; raptorial forelegs; may be bright green and/or brown; nymphs resemble adults but without wings
Male: Much more slender than female, 8 abdominal segments, readily fly away
Female: Enlarged abdomen with 6 abdominal segments, does not fly



Management

- Generalist predator of both pest insects, pollinators and sometimes small vertebrates (hummingbirds)
- It is not recommended to purchase oothecae for the garden

Caution

- When handling, raptorial legs have spines that can grasp and pinch



Photos: J. Green