

# A Bug's Life

# Giant water bug

*Lethocerus americanus*

## Fun facts

- Freshwater aquatic insect in ponds, marshes, slow-flowing streams
- Called toe-biters or electric light bugs
- Predators of aquatic arthropods, snails, fish, and amphibians
- Lay eggs on vegetation by water
- Overwinter as adult in mud at bottom of body of water

## Identification

Habit: May be found at night because they are attracted and fly towards electric lights at night, found at porch lights, parking lots, and sports fields  
Adults: 2 to 2-1/2" long, flattened, brown, large grasping forelimbs, other legs specialized for swimming, snorkel-like tubes at end of abdomen

## Management

- No management required as they are not generally harmful to humans
- Turn off lights at night

## Caution

- Do not handle, can inflict a painful bite and latch on with strong forelimbs after playing dead

