

A Bug's Life

Soldier beetles

Margined leatherwing - Chauliognathus marginatus, Goldenrod leatherwing - Chauliognathus pensylvanica

Fun facts

- Pollinating beetles that feed on nectar, pollen, small insects
- Resemble lightning bugs/fireflies but do not produce light
- Seen in large numbers on flowers: Margined leatherwing (spring) and goldenrod leatherwing (fall)
- Larvae are predators underground and at the soil surface
- Overwinter as larvae

Identification

Larva: Dark color with velvety coat
Beetle: 1/2" long, flexible wing covers (elytra), orange color with brown-black markings
Margined leatherwing: Deeper orange color, dark marking and patterns more variable
Goldenrod leatherwing: Wide rectangle shape on pronotum, 2 prominent dark spots on wing cover,

Management

- Chemical treatment is not needed
- May occasionally hitch a ride inside on a person or object
- If indoors, sweep, vacuum or catch and release outdoors
- Exclude from home by sealing gaps, installing screens, closing doors
- Soldier beetles cause no damage to plants and do not sting or bite



Photos: J. Green