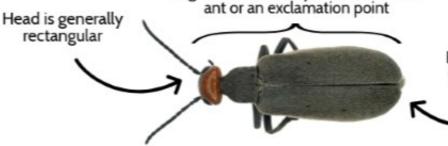
BE CAREFUL OF BLISTER BEETLES!

Blister beetles exude a chemical called cantharidin which can induce a painful blister on our skin, often occurring on arms, necks, behind ears, and in between fingers

Blister beetle adults are usually 3/4 inch long and have a body that looks like an ant or an exclamation point



Body and top wings are leathery in appearance

There are several common species including the ash-grey, the striped, and the black blister beetle











As larvae blister beetles feed on grasshopper eggs, helping keep those pests in check.
As adults they damage numerous plants including alfalfa, carrot, cabbage, eggplant, pepper, potato, squash, tomato, lupine, iris, hostas, and rose

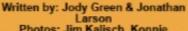


They cause irregular chewing damage where leaves are ragged and missing edges, the damage can appear suddenly



A painful blister left behind after exposure to cantharidin

Blister beetles can be physically controlled by hand removal. Wear rubber gloves to protect your hands, and throw the beetles in to a bucket of soapy water. Organic insecticides like neem, pyrethrins, and spinosad a provide short term control and will require multiple applications. Synthetic insecticide options include bifenthrin, lambda-cyhalothrin, carbaryl, or permethrin. Always check the label of the product you purchase to ensure the pest is listed, as well as the plant you wish to protect.



Photos: Jim Kalisch, Konnie Robertson, and Brie Frickenstein Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture. Nebraska Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

