

## WHAT IS THAT BUG?

This year there are a number of different insects showing up in the area, and I am sure by the end of the summer we can expect many more. A few years ago we had high numbers of the Painted Lady Butterfly; and had thistle caterpillars in soybean fields causing some damage. This is the larval stage of the Painted Lady Caterpillars. Several years ago we had the silver spotted skipper butterfly and larvae that caused some damage to soybean fields. With the linden trees starting to bloom there is an insect that will be all over the linden tree blossoms and also several other flowers that are pollinating. A few years ago I thought it was a striped blister beetle, but after further research I discovered that the insect that was covering our linden trees and other plants was the soldier beetle. The big difference between these two insects is blister beetles are pests that will eat on plant foliage, while soldier beetles are beneficial insects that prey on pests; such as aphids, caterpillars, eggs and soft-bodied insects. The soldier beetle also looks similar to the lightning bugs, without the light. So if you see some beetles around your flowers and they are not eating the foliage, they very well may be soldier beetles and you don't need to worry about them.



Another pest you should be aware of is the Japanese beetle. These beetles started showing up a few years ago. Their favorite foliage to eat is the leaves of the Linden or Basswood tree. In high numbers they can completely defoliate a Linden tree. They usually do not cause irreparable damage to your Linden trees and they will recover, but defoliation year after year by this beetle can be harmful. The Japanese beetle has been a pest in soybeans, defoliating them, but usually at levels that do not require treatment. Be sure to keep an eye out for this beetle. Another insect that can cause significant damage to crops and other plants is the Brown Marmorated Stinkbug. This bug has shown up periodically in southeast Nebraska, but not in high numbers. It appears to be moving westward from the east coast and damages fruits, vegetables, and soybeans while being a nuisance to homeowners as well.



There will be a number of other insects showing up later in the summer. Aphids will be on several tree leaves. Aphids suck the sap out of plant material. In general, aphids are not going to harm a large tree, but if you have a large infestation on vegetable crops, flowers or other ornamentals, treatment may be required with a pesticide. With all the rain and plenty of standing water, mosquitoes will be a major concern this year. Be prepared with repellent because of the diseases spread by mosquitoes. Ticks are another concern. High numbers have been reported already in southeast Nebraska, so use the appropriate repellents for this pest if you are outside, especially in the country.

We will keep you abreast if specific insect infestations or problems develop. If you identify an insect problem, feel free to contact me at our Extension office at (402) 274-4755.

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