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Western Conifer Seed Bug

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This insect has the habit of entering buildings at the onset of cold weather in the late summer or early fall as it seeks a protected site to spend the winter. These bugs do not bite or cause damage in the home. Adults are 3/4 inch long, elongate, reddish to dull brown with a faint, white zig-zag straight line across the center of the wings. They have long thin antennae and hind legs that are flattened (leaf-like). This insect belongs to the leaf-footed bug family Coreiidae. They are often mistaken for Assassin bugs.



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Western Pine conifer bugs have well developed scent glands that emit strong pine like odors. For that reason they are incorrectly called stink bugs. Individuals can become a nuisance when crawling up the sides of buildings during September and October. Sometimes they cluster in small groups. Leaf-footed bugs can fly readily and can make a buzzing noise if disturbed. If they can crawl under siding or other openings in the home these insects will overwinter in the house and re-emerge on warm, sunny days during the winter and spring months.

Life cycle. Western Conifer seed bugs have a piercing sucking moth part. The nymphs (immatures) feed by sucking nutrients from the seed cones of white pine, red pine, Scots pine, Austrian pine, mugo pine, white spruce, Douglas fir and hemlock. This feeding damage does not hurt the tree, but reduced seed production may result from heavy infestations. Usually a single generation occurs each year. This insect has become more numerous in Wisconsin during the last 5 years

Control

The first line of defense is to build these insects out. Screen attic, overhang, and wall vents to mechanically block points of entry for the insect. Eliminate or caulk gaps around door and window frames and soffits, and tighten up loose fitting screens, windows or doors. Insecticidal soap sprays or general insecticides can be used to kill insects clustered on the outside during the fall. Indoors vacuum or hand remove adults.

For more information: Contact your County Extension Agent: