

Invasive Insect Species

What's happening to our lilies?

Lily Leaf Beetle, *Lilioceris lili*

Origin: Thought to be native to Asia, first found in North America near Montreal

Eggs:

- eggs are small and reddish-orange
- laid in irregular lines of 3 to 12 eggs **on the underside of leaves**
- **adult females will only lay eggs on true lilies and fritillery**
- each female adult can lay 200-300 eggs that hatch in 8-10 days



Larvae: this is the most destructive stage

- slug-like in appearance, yellowish-white to orange in coloration with black head
- cover themselves with their feces to deter predation and protect themselves from the sun
- feed voraciously on foliage for 16-24 days
- may be difficult to spot as they begin feeding on the undersides of leaves
- rapidly defoliate plants eating leaves, buds and flowers
- mature larvae crawl down the plant and pupate in the soil



Pupae:

- fluorescent orange color inside a waterproof cocoon
- pupation takes about 20-22 days
- the adult emerges, digs it's way out of the soil and feeds on lilies until fall

Adults:

- bright scarlet red beetle with black head, antennae, legs and underparts
- less than 1/3" or 6-8 mm long
- squeak when squeezed
- overwinter as adult in the soil beneath host plants
- emerge in early spring (late April to early May) to forage and mate
- feed on young lily leaves
- **adults are strong fliers so can spread long distances**



Food Preference:

- *Lilium* sp. (true lilies: Turk's cap, Tiger, Easter, Asiatic and Oriental lilies) and *Fritillaria* sp.
- have been known to feed on Solomon's seal and Indian cucumber root
- lightly "taste" other plants (Bittersweet, potato, hollyhock, hosta sp.) but most damage will occur on true lilies and their close relatives
- do not attack daylilies

Management:

- know the life cycle = increased detection
- hand pick and destroy adults, larvae and eggs
- hold a soapy bucket of water under adults as they jump off leaves if even slightly disturbed
- organic products such as Neem oil can be applied
- larvae are more susceptible to chemical applications than adult beetles
- entire plant and both sides of leaves must be treated
- use chemicals sparingly as they also kill beneficial insects such as ladybeetles



What can we do?

Don't import plants from infested areas.

Control the Lily leaf beetle in your own back yard

Be aware of the impact pesticides can have on other insects and wildlife

For more information contact: The Parks and Recreation Department at 368-1025

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