



## Boxelder bug

*Boisea trivittatus*

Order Hemiptera, Family Rhopalidae;  
scentless plant bugs  
Native pest

**Host plants:** Boxelder is preferred, but ash and silver maple are also hosts.

**Description:** Adult bugs are approximately 12 mm long, black with red markings. Nymphs have bright red bodies with black wing pads.

**Life history:** Eggs are laid in early spring; nymphs feed on leaves and seeds, completing their development in late summer or early fall. Adults often aggregate in large numbers, especially on sunny surfaces. There is one generation a year.

**Overwintering:** Adults overwinter in sheltered places and are a nuisance pest as they move into homes for the winter.

**Damage symptoms:** Female boxelder trees may display distorted growth in newly developing leaves as a result of feeding by nymphs and adults.

**Monitoring:** In fall look for large aggregations of adults on sunny bark or sunny parts of nearby buildings. Look for feeding on seeds and newly developing leaves in the spring and summer.

**Cultural control:** Replace female boxelder trees since they harbor the largest populations of this insect.

**Chemical control:** Spray adult aggregations in the fall with horticultural soap or oil. Spray foliage in spring with other insecticides, if unacceptably large populations occur.

**Biological control:** No reports of natural enemies

**Plant mortality risk:** Low

**Biorational pesticides:** azadirachtin, insecticidal soap, pyrethrins

**Conventional pesticides:** acephate, bifenthrin, carbaryl, chlorpyrifos (nursery only), cyfluthrin, deltamethrin, fluralinate, imidacloprid, lambda-cyhalothrin, malathion, permethrin



Boxelder bug adults aggregating on bark of a boxelder tree. (24)

Photo: James Solomon, USDA Forest Service, The Bugwood Network, University of Georgia.



Boxelder bug adult. (24)

Photo: Jeff Hahn