



Fourlined plant bug

Poecilocapsus lineatus

Order Hemiptera, Family Miridae; plant or leaf bugs
Native pest

Host plants: Amur maple, azalea, dogwood, forsythia, rose, viburnum, and approximately 250 other plant species, especially in the mint family.

Description: Adult bugs usually have yellow forewings but these may change to bright green. There are four black stripes down the back. Adults are approximately 7 mm long. Larvae vary from red to yellow with black stripes only on the wing buds.

Life history: Eggs hatch in late April to May. The nymphal developmental stage lasts about 30 days. Adults feed on the upper surface of leaves. There is one generation a year.

Overwintering: Eggs inserted into a slit near the top of shoots.

Damage symptoms: Feeding by both adults and nymphs may cause stippling on leaves—spots of discoloration that may turn from yellow to brown to black. Holes may develop in leaves when heavy infestations occur. Plants are not killed by this insect. Feeding activity ends in early summer.

Monitoring: The fourlined plant bug hides under leaves and may be difficult to detect. Look in May and June for signs of stippling on leaves. Net sweeps of foliage may confirm the presence of this insect.

Cultural control: Prune perennial plants at ground level to dispose of nymphs.

Chemical control: Spray in May and June if feeding damage reaches unacceptable levels. Horticultural oils are effective against nymphs.

Biological control: No report 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



Fourlined plant bug adult. (130)

Photo: David Laughlin