



Class Insecta, Insects

Order Hemiptera, True bugs

Hemiptera means “half wing” and refers to the fact that the top half of the first pair of wings is toughened and hard, while the bottom of the first pair and the second pair are membranous. Hemipterans also have piercing and sucking mouthparts; some suck plant juices and are plant pests, while others are predators and can inflict a painful bite. The order includes both crop and animal pests, as well as beneficial predators.

Stink bugs

Family Pentatomidae

Description and life history: These medium-sized insects are 10–15mm and usually green or brown with a broad, shield-shaped body. Many discharge a distasteful smell when handled. Most are plant feeders, but a few prey on significant ornamental pests.

Prey species: The genera *Podisus* and *Perillus* include several highly efficient predators of important pests. *Podisus maculiventris*, spined soldier bug, and *Perillus bioculatus*, twospotted stink bug, feed on caterpillars and leaf-feeding beetles such as the Colorado potato beetle and Mexican bean beetle. Both are available commercially in the United States.



Podisus maculiventris, spined soldier bug adult attacking a tussock moth caterpillar. (334)
Photo: David Laughlin



Predatory stink bug feeding on elm leaf beetle larva. (W45)
Photo: Whitney Cranshaw



Twospotted stink bug nymph feeding on beetle larva. (W47)
Photo: Whitney Cranshaw



Perillus bioculatus, twospotted stink bug nymph, feeding on a hawk moth larva. (333)
Photo: John Davidson