

Stink Bug



GARDEN EARTH
NATURALIST

ECO-SERVICE CARDS

STINK BUG

FAMILY: Pentatomidae

ORDER: Hemiptera (means “half” wings)

IDENTIFICATION CLUES



- ◆ 1/4 - 3/4 inches long
- ◆ body shaped like a shield with a large triangular plate in the middle
- ◆ brown or colorful depending on species
- ◆ piercing and sucking mouthparts in a “beak” at the front of the head



Where to Look:

Stink bugs can be found on plants in fields, woodlands and gardens.

Who Eats It?

Stink bugs emit a noxious odor when disturbed, a defense against predators. They also make a chirpy noise with their hindlegs to alarm predators. Some birds feed on stink bugs as well as parasitic wasps.



LIFE CYCLE

INCOMPLETE METAMORPHOSIS

The female lays barrel-shaped eggs which can be bright colors or spined. The young nymphs look like adults but with small wings buds. The wings develop as the nymph grows and goes through several molts.

What It Eats.

A few stink bugs are predators and eat other insects. Many stink bugs are plant eaters and feed on the juices of seeds, berries and fruits.

Role in the Ecosystem

The role of stink bugs varies by species but many are predators and help control insect pest populations.



Did You Know

Spined soldier bugs are a type of stink bug used by farmers to control crop pests. They stab their prey with a sharp beak, inject a paralyzing venom, then suck their victims dry.