

Name That Bug

If you said "Seed bug" you're right!

Harlequin bug (*Murgantia histrionica*) is brightly patterned with orange, black and white markings and is found all over the southern U.S. It is a sap sucker and causes leaf damage to various mustard family plants such as cabbage, radish or other crucifers. Nymphs are smaller, more rounded versions of the adults, and have the same feeding pattern.



Control of heavy infestations of Harlequin bugs can be accomplished using relatively non-toxic products such as **rotenone, pyrethrin, Neem oil,** or **insecticidal soap.**



Squash vine borer (*Melittia cucurbitae*) as an adult is a bold, brash day-flying moth. The whitish larvae resemble beetle grubs and bore into the stems of winter or summer squash and pumpkins where they feed and cause wilting and rotting of the plant.

Control of the squash borer requires close observation of squash plants for the presence of the adult moths. As soon as they are present one can place floating row covers over the vines when squash vine borer adults are first detected. The barriers should be kept in place for about two weeks after the first adult moths are observed. The row covers must be securely anchored at the edges to prevent adults from getting underneath. Insecticides such as permethrin and bifenthrin can be sprayed or dusted on the base of the stems and should be repeated in 10-14 days as long as the moths are present.

This website provides further information.

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/insects/find/squash-vine-borers/>

Cucumber beetle (*Acalymma trivittatum*), Western, striped, is yellowish orange with three black stripes and a black head. It feeds on a wide variety of vegetables but prefers cucumber, melons and squash and is often found inside squash flowers. Their feeding can be especially damaging to seedlings. Larvae live in the soil where they do little damage to roots. However, do not plant the same crop in the same area the following season as the cucumber beetles will be present in large numbers.



Control of cucumber beetles may be necessary when they are present in large numbers on young plants. Floating row covers provide reliable defense against cucumber beetles when left in place until flowering begins at which time the row covers must be removed to allow pollinators access to the flowers. Alternatively heavy infestations of the beetles can be controlled by the repeated use of insecticides such as permethrin and spinosad. Further details on managing cucumber beetles can be found at the following website:

<http://www.extension.org/pages/64274/managing-cucumber-beetles-in-organic-farming-systems#.VfcKWRFViko>



Seed bug (*Lygaeus kalmii*), a common but relatively harmless bug of striking red, gray and black coloration with two white spots on its wings. A wide variety of seeds including weeds are consumed by these bugs. They are not considered to be pests. They commonly prefer milkweeds and

because they absorb the milkweed toxins when sucking the juices of the plant, they are poisonous to other insects.

Control of seed bugs is not necessary!

Reference: Garden Insects of North America by Whitney Cranshaw; copyright 2004, Princeton University Press



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