

Box Elder Bugs

What are they and why are they here?

The adult box elder bug is a dark brownish-black with red stripes. They feed on certain flowers and trees, primarily the box elder tree. In the fall, they congregate around buildings seeking protection, particularly on the south and west sides of the building in order to keep warm. They disappear as the temperatures drop and the snow starts to fall.

Are they harmful?

No. They will not bite and they are not harmful to houseplants, pets, or you. They are not poisonous and they do not carry any diseases. They will not reproduce inside buildings and are not dirty. However, they are a nuisance.

What can be done about them?

There are some simple things that you can do to alleviate the problem until they disappear for the winter:

1. Use a vacuum cleaner to remove any that have found their way indoors. Do not crush them as they will leave a red stain and emit a foul odor.
2. Use soap as an insecticide. Put about 2 tablespoons of liquid detergent per gallon of water. It does a fairly good job of killing; you just need to make sure it is washed off of painted walls immediately to ensure that it will not stain the wall when dry.
3. Make sure your windows are shut completely. You may open your window if needed, but a few may find their way in around the screens. Having your window shut completely will drastically cut down on how many find their way in.

Please call Maintenance at 801.581.8668 if you have questions.

