

Be on the Lookout for New Stinkbug

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A new pest may soon be moving into Georgia and farmers and homeowners are urged to be on the lookout. The brown marmorated stinkbug, or *Halyomorpha halys*, is an invasive pest from Asia that has already been seen in 33 states and has recently been located in South Carolina. Similar to the now infamous “kudzu bug” that was spotted in Georgia in 2009, the brown marmorated stink bug is a nuisance pest to homeowners as well as an agricultural pest because of its tendency of feeding on fruit and vegetable crops. In 2010, farmers in Maryland and Pennsylvania reported heavy damage to apple and grape crops.

As many as 60 species of stinkbugs live in Georgia, so identifying the bug correctly will be important for UGA researchers to determine if the bug has entered Georgia. The bug is $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch long and is a mottled brown color. One distinguishing characteristic is the presence of dark and light bands that can be found on the antennae and abdomen. With cooler weather creeping in, the bugs may attempt to enter houses to overwinter. Crushing the bugs would not be advisable; as the name implies, this “stinkbug” emits a very offensive odor if crushed.

So what should you do if you run across one of these stinkbugs? Since they have not officially been observed in Georgia yet, UGA entomologists are anxious to document their arrival. You should attempt to capture one of the bugs alive, place it in a container and put it in a freezer to kill it. You can bring the specimen by the Extension office for proper identification. You could also take a picture of the insect with a digital camera and email it to the Extension office at uge1191@uga.edu.