

Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation

Take Steps to Reduce Spotted Lanternflies

Aug. 1, 2023 - Invasive species, Spotted Lanternfly, has been found in our community and the Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation has been taking steps to reduce this species from our parks and recreational areas.



The Spotted Lanternfly is a sap-sucking, threatening invasive species that can cause significant damage to parks and wooded areas as feeding stresses plants, making them vulnerable to disease and attacks from other insects. They are identified by their black or red spotted nymphs as juveniles and look more moth-like with white wings as adults. If found, it is best to kill them.

The Westchester County Parks Department has surveyed large outbreaks and is evaluating the best non-toxic sprays to use to get rid of them. Most recently, the department has acquired high-powered commercial vacuums that are used to suck up large congregations of Spotted Lanternflies found in our parks.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said, "The Spotted Lanternfly has become a nuisance – and a potential threat – in Westchester County. The steps and suggestions recommended by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation should be taken seriously and I urge the community to come together to help reduce this invasive."

Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation, Kathy O'Connor said, "Our Conservation Division are leaders in the conservation space and I'm proud of the steps they are taking to not only work to lower the number of the invasive in our parks, but how they are educating the public to also do their part."

In addition to using high-powered vacuums, the department previously partnered with the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference's Conservation Dogs, who are trained to sniff out the eggs in order to detect the next wave of invading insects before they become more of a problem.

Ways for homeowners to kill them include using power washers and vacuum cleaners as stomping them doesn't always work since they are quick.

Please report sightings to parksinfo@westchestercountyny.gov and include location, contact information and pictures.