

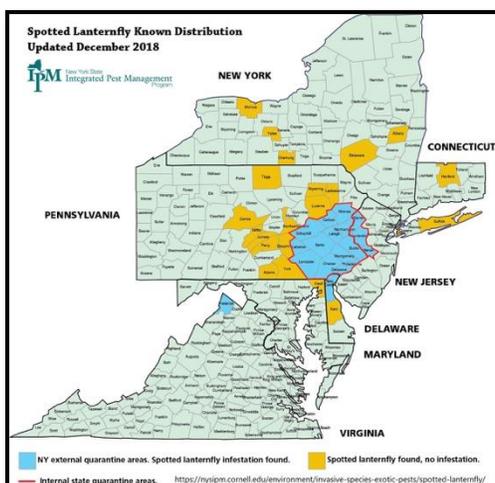
Explore January: Beat That Bug - Winter Worries

Here in New Jersey, we are experiencing the effects of the global climate crisis first-hand, evidenced by sustained trends of highly erratic and now often volatile weather. At Duke Farms on December 25th, it was a max of 63°F, followed by an intense drop to a max of a mere 30°F the following day. The rain that pummeled the rooves of houses should typically have been a wintery blizzard, but instead it caused mass flooding. This unnatural fluctuation in weather patterns is the headline of the story surrounding climate change and all the dangers that it poses, including offering a golden ticket to various invading species – like the Spotted Lanternfly - that bring along their own host of threats.

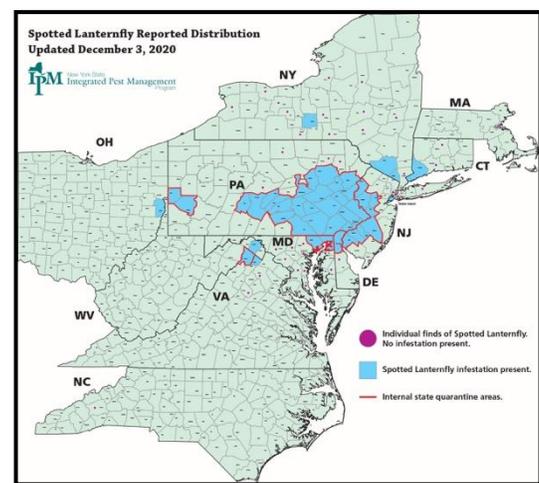
Back in June 2020, [this article](#) about the Spotted Lanternfly was posted to the [Duke Farms Distance Learning Portal](#), offering the basics of what the Spotted Lanternfly is, where it came from, how we got to this point in its infestation, and some ideas on how you as a community member can become part of the ever-evolving solutions! This information is still very useful to know, so do yourself and your community a favor by checking it out. This new article is meant to present the importance of population control methods throughout the winter season, because now more than ever it is vital that we do all we can to get ahead of each coming hatching season.



Nature is full of cycles that interact with one another to balance populations. In a given climate zone, the animals within it have evolved to try to survive in specific temperatures and weather systems, but only to allow a healthy number of individuals to continue on to the next season. Usually, in areas that experience freezing weather, many individual organisms die to allow for a healthy few to continue reproducing during the warmer months. Global warming is causing winters to be milder and this lack of normal severe freezing temperatures allows many more organisms (even native ones!) to survive than what a healthy ecosystem can sustain. Add invasive species such as the spotted lanternfly into the mix and you get a terrible reaction: these insects are from a climate that is slightly warmer than that of northeastern North America, so these milder winters are allowing enormous numbers of them to survive, reproduce, and continue to hitchhike their way into new areas.



These maps, just two years apart, show a colossal increase in the SLF's range. The winters of both 2018 and 2019 seem to have had little effect on the population.





Duke Farms

What is to be done, especially during the winter? ***Do your part to search for and destroy the egg masses that were laid during the late fall*** on tree trunks, park benches, boulders, fence posts, etc. Get ready to catch and kill the newly hatched nymphs by building an easy and cheap DIY trap, which you can see a tutorial for [here](#). This circle trap is wildlife safe and is one of the preferred methods of trapping the spotted lanternfly; use of sticky tape bands is NOT recommended because it is deadly for native insects, birds, and bats, which are often trapped and killed by these bands. With even just one trap, you can be a part of the solution to protect our local ecosystems!