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## Giving a Tree a Checkup

During an Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist (OCVN) Class, one of the participants, Jane Staib, presented an excellent program on the Spotted Lanternfly. I have been hearing about this one-inch insect for a few years, but now, she reported it has been identified in Ohio, possibly as close as Port Clinton.

Our trees seem to be under constant attack from many different assailants – insects, fungus, disease, deer, weather, and many others. When was the last time you really checked on your trees? Doctors recommend people get an annual health checkup, why not give your trees a thorough yearly checkup?

How and when do you give a tree a health checkup? Good questions. Just about every source I have read recommends a different time of year, depending on what type of potential damage you are looking for. Each tree assailant attacks at different times throughout the year resulting in various types of visible impacts.

So, let's just focus on the Spotted Lanternfly for now. Jane informed us that this exotic invasive species is native to China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam. It was first identified in Pennsylvania in 2014. It attacks tree of heaven, grape, hop, apple, stone fruit, maple, walnut, willow, and others.

She warned us that an established population of this insect could devastate the production of anything made with grapes, hops, apples, and various other fruit! If you were not highly motivated before to check your trees and vines, I hope you are now!

The easiest time to locate and stop the cycle of more Spotted Lanternfly is when it is still in its egg. Eggs are reported to be laid on the bark of trees from September to November. They start to hatch in May. So, that gives you ample time to check your trees and vines this fall, winter, and early spring (September-April) and destroy the eggs before they can hatch.

Oddly enough, this insect may also opt for more unique places to lay their eggs, where there are no trees or vines. As you are doing your outdoor fall cleaning and hanging of holiday lights and decorations, it is important to check for egg masses on just about everything; outdoor furniture and cushions, light bulbs, fence posts and decks, camping equipment, tires, sides of buildings and campers, and so forth.

So, once again, don't be a transporter of this insect. If you vacation or spend summers by the lake or in other parts of the country (in or traveling through Pennsylvania), make sure you thoroughly check everything! The Spotted Lanternfly could be incubating on your property right now.

For more information and pictures of the Spotted Lanternfly life stages, Jane recommends to visit: [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov) and search "Spotted Lanternfly" or <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/anr-83>.

Thanks for helping to keep Ohio's trees and vines safe and healthy!