**Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs**

**Segment for Week of Oct 25, 2021**

This is Julie Callahan bringing you information on shore friendly living and gardening from the Master Gardeners and Virginia Cooperative Extension.

In recent years, stink bugs seemed to suddenly invade our gardens in large numbers. Where did they all come from? What can we do to get rid of them? We have been learning more every year about them.

The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug was brought to the United States around 1996 in shipments from China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan, where it is a native agricultural pest. The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug has a shield-shaped, marbled brown abdomen and marbled legs. There are also two lighter white bands on the antennae and darker bands on the overlapping part at the rear of the front pair of wings. These characteristics distinguish them from the other stink bugs in Virginia.

One or two generations occur each year for stink bugs, depending on the weather. After they overwinter, adults lay eggs on the underside of plant leaves in late spring or early summer. The nymphs or immature stink bugs feed on plants in summer and molt to adults in late summer.

Brown marmorated stink bugs usually enter homes at the end of summer as adults, seeking a warm place to spend the winter. They will not do any damage inside of your home, and they are harmless to humans and pets. If they are seen in large numbers, do not panic. Most Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs find their way inside through cracks in siding, behind chimneys, and through spaces in window screens and around doors. Repair these areas with caulk and replace torn screens and weather stripping. You may want to reduce bright outdoor light at night, which attracts the bugs. Store firewood 20 feet from the house as this an attractive location for stink bugs to live. Use a vacuum to catch them indoors, or dispose of any that you catch in soapy water and dump the water outdoors. Other native pest stink bugs overwinter outside beneath plant debris in orchards and fields or in brush piles.

Insecticide applications indoors are not advised and do not really help.  Insecticide applications to the exterior of buildings only are effective when applied from mid September to early October.  After which, the bugs have typically entered their overwintering structures.  To help control pest stink bugs, remove weeds and wild fruit trees to keep the bugs from sheltering there and damaging your crops. Keep grass trimmed and remove piles of clippings. Organic insecticides are also available for the home garden, such as pyrethrins and insecticidal soap. It is important to read the label and follow all precautions.

For more information or for answers to your questions, contact your local Accomack or Northampton County Extension Office. Here on the Shore call either 678-7946 or 787-1361

**References**
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[PDF](http://www.fairfaxgardening.org/wp-content/webdocs/pdf/StinkBug.pdf)