



Photo: Karly Fifarek



Scarlet Lily Beetle



The adult scarlet lily beetle has a bright red back. Photo: Eric Lagassa, Washington State Department of Agriculture

What Is It?

The scarlet lily beetle (*Lilioceris lili*; also known as the lily leaf beetle) is a pest native to Eurasia that preys on true lilies and fritillaries. While all lilies are attacked, Asiatic lilies or hybrids and some native North American lilies tend to receive the most damage. It also eats, though not as readily, giant lilies (closely related to true lilies), false Solomon’s seal, and twisted stalk. The beetles do not attack daylilies.

Is It Here Yet?

Yes. The scarlet lily beetle has been in Bellevue since 2012.



Dark, slimy larvae. Photo: Maggie Freeman, Washington State Department of Agriculture

Why Should I Care?

The scarlet lily beetle can damage gardens severely and is known to voraciously attack native lilies. Preventing an infestation from spreading is the most effective and least costly way to protect uninfested areas.

What Are Its Characteristics?

- Black underside, head, antennae, and legs; bright red backs.
- Adults may chirp or squeak if disturbed.
- About 1/4 to 1/2 inch long.
- Small clusters of red- or orange-brown eggs laid on underside of leaves.
- Larvae coat themselves in excrement and appear dark and slimy.

 **Report Sightings**



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How Do I Distinguish It From Native Species?

The most likely insects that would be confused with the scarlet lily beetle are ladybugs, a beneficial beetle. Ladybugs are much rounder and usually have white dashes or black spots on their backs.

How Can We Stop It?

Removing beetles, larvae, and eggs throughout the growing season beginning in April is an effective way to limit the damage. Avoid transporting lilies, fritillaries, and other potential host plants long distances to limit the spread of this pest. The Washington State Department of Agriculture has begun a program to introduce a safe biological control agent, which has been very effective in controlling populations of the lily leaf beetle in the eastern United States.



Bright orange or red eggs are laid on the underside of the leaf. Photo: Karly Fifarek

What Should I Do If I Find One?

Report immediately via the WA Invasives mobile app or reporting web form at <https://invasivespecies.wa.gov/report-a-sighting/>.