



Glassy-winged sharpshooter eggs are laid together on the underside of leaves, usually in groups of 10 to 12. The egg masses appear as small, greenish blisters. These blisters are easier to observe after the eggs hatch, when they appear as tan to brown scars on the leaves.



Parasitized egg masses are tan to brown with small, circular holes at one end of the eggs.

GLASSY-WINGED SHARPSHOOTER



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The brown scars left by the egg masses on the underside of the leaf are easier to see after the nymphs emerge from the eggs. A leaf may have more than one egg mass.



Female with white secretions on the wings that she uses to cover newly laid egg masses.

This informational brochure was produced by ANR Communication Services for the University of California Pierce's Disease Research and Emergency Response Task Force in 2000 and updated in 2018. You may download a copy of the brochure from the California Department of Food and Agriculture Pierce's Disease Control Program website at <http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/pdcp/>.

For local information, contact your UC Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor or County Agricultural Commissioner.

# GLASSY-WINGED SHARPSHOOTER

A Serious Threat to California Agriculture



from the

 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

# GLASSY-WINGED SHARPSHOOTER

## The glassy-winged sharpshooter, *Homalodisca vitripennis*, is a serious pest in California.

Native to the southeastern United States and northeastern Mexico, this insect was first observed in California in 1990 and is now established in portions of Central and Southern California. It is a particular threat to California vineyards due to its ability to spread *Xylella fastidiosa*, the bacterium that causes Pierce's disease. Pierce's disease kills grapevines, and there are no effective treatments for it. The glassy-winged sharpshooter led to a Pierce's disease epidemic in Southern California in 1999 and it continues to pose a threat to viticulture throughout the state.



The immature nymphs are wingless.

In addition to Pierce's disease, various strains of *X. fastidiosa* cause scorch diseases of almond, oleander, mulberry, olive, and liquidambar. It also causes alfalfa dwarf and citrus variegated chlorosis. The potential spread of these diseases by the glassy-winged sharpshooter is a concern to landscape professionals and agricultural producers throughout California.

### Host Plants

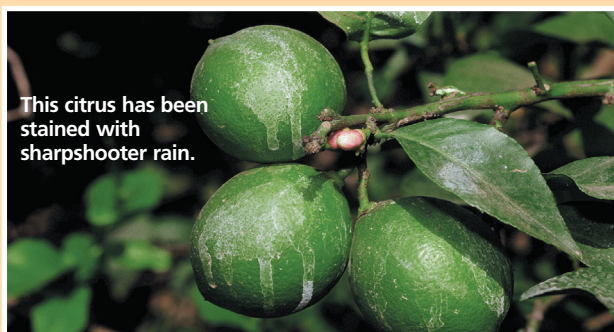
The glassy-winged sharpshooter ranges over many habitats, including agricul-

tural crops, urban landscapes, native woodlands, and riparian vegetation. It feeds on hundreds of plant species including woody plants and annual and perennial herbaceous plants. It occurs in high numbers on citrus. Common landscape host plants include bird of paradise, cottonwood, crape myrtle, eucalyptus, euonymus, hibiscus, pittosporum, sunflower, and xylosma, among many others. On most plants it feeds on stems rather than leaves. When feeding, it excretes copious amounts of watery excrement in



The glassy-winged sharpshooter gets its name from its transparent wings.

a steady stream of small droplets. In urban areas this "sharpshooter rain" can be a messy nuisance. When dry, the droplets can give plants a whitewashed appearance that reduces fruit quality, particularly on citrus.



This citrus has been stained with sharpshooter rain.

### Identification

The adult glassy-winged sharpshooter is a large insect, almost 1/2 inch (12 mm) long, and is dark brown to black with a lighter underside. The upper parts of the head and back are stippled with ivory or yellowish spots and the wings are partly transparent with reddish veins. Adult females may have large white spots on their upper wings. This white substance is used to cover freshly laid egg masses.

The nymphs are wingless, mottled olive gray, and are variable in size, depending on their age.

### Detection

Early detection of the glassy-winged sharpshooter in noninfested areas of California is important for developing control strategies. A map showing areas in California infested by glassy-winged sharpshooter can be found on the California Department of Food and Agriculture Pierce's Disease Control Program website at [http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/pdcp/map\\_index.html](http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/pdcp/map_index.html). Yellow sticky traps are useful for detecting and monitoring the glassy-winged sharpshooter. Plants can be checked visually or by using a sweep net. Look for adult insects, nymphs, and egg masses.



The glassy-winged sharpshooter is shown next to the smaller blue-green sharpshooter.

If you find egg masses or insects you suspect to be the glassy-winged sharpshooter, please contact your local UC Cooperative Extension office and/or your County Agricultural Commissioner. They can help with insect collection and positive identification. Please note where and when specimens were collected and on which plants they were found.

### Control

For recommendations on controlling sharpshooters please contact your local UC Cooperative Extension office, County Agricultural Commissioner, nursery, or similar source.



Glassy-winged sharpshooters are large insects, about 1/2 inch long.