

## Glassy-winged sharpshooter

### What is Glassy-winged sharpshooter?

The Glassy-winged sharpshooter (*Homalodisca vitripennis*) is a leafhopper that causes direct damage through its feeding activities and excrement 'showers'. However, the greatest threat associated with this pest is that it acts as a highly efficient vector of the bacterium *Xylella fastidiosa*, which causes Pierce's disease in *Vitis* species or Leaf scorch in *Prunus* species.

### What does it look like?

Glassy-winged sharpshooters are 12-14 mm long and easily seen with the naked eye. They are dark-brown to black with yellow dots on their head and body (thorax). Their wings are translucent with distinct reddish veins visible.

'Clutches' of up to 27 eggs are laid on the underside of leaves in a side-by-side arrangement. Eggs are deposited just under the leaf surface giving it a blister-like appearance.

### What can it be confused with?

There are a number of sharpshooters that are native to Australia that share features with the Glassy-winged sharpshooter. Head shape and size is one key distinguishing feature of the Glassy-winged sharpshooter, but an expert would be required to identify this pest to the species level.

### What should I look for?

The large insects can be spotted easily with the naked eye following infestation, particularly as they commonly sit on leaf and stem surfaces. Watery excrement, appearing as white spots, often collects during feeding. Leaf scorch symptoms may also be evident if *X. fastidiosa* was also introduced into the country.



The dark-brown to black leafhopper is covered with numerous yellow dots on the head and thorax

Reyes Garcia II, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org



The underside of the Glassy-winged sharp shooter is a lighter colour

Russ Otters, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org



Adult Glassy-winged sharp shooter on a leaf surface

Johnny N. Dell, Bugwood.org



### How does it spread?

Adult Glassy-winged sharpshooters are strong flyers and can move through crops rapidly. Nymphs are unable to fly, but readily spread between plants by walking and jumping. Most long distance movement occurs as viable egg masses on nursery stock or crop plants.

### Where is it now?

The Glassy-winged sharpshooter is found in eastern and western USA and in Mexico. Recently this pest has been detected on a number of new locations, including the neighbouring countries of Tahiti and the Cook Islands.

### How can I protect my production nursery from Glassy-winged sharpshooter?

Check your production nursery frequently for the presence of new pests and unusual symptoms. Make sure you are familiar with common pests of the nursery production industry so you can tell if you see something different.

**If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline**

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE  
1800 084 881**



Egg masses deposited just under the leaf surface in a side-by-side manner

Reyes Garcia II



The lighter underside of the insect contrasts with the dark brown-black colour of the top side

Johnny N. Dell, Bugwood.org



Top view of adult insect, showing reddish veins present in the translucent wings

PaDIL (N. Hummel)

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