

GREEN LACEWING Neuroptera: Chrysopidae *Chrysopa* spp.

DESCRIPTION

Adults are green to yellow-green with four delicate transparent wings with many veins and crossveins. Adults are about 18 mm long with long hair-like antennae and red-gold eyes. **Larvae** are slender, mottled gray or yellow-gray and about 9.5 mm long. Larvae resemble lady beetle larvae but are flatter, smaller, and usually lighter colored. Larvae are referred to as aphid lions. **Eggs** are pale green, almost white, and are laid singly on long, slender stalks on plant foliage near prey. There are at least two species of green lacewing and one brown lacewing in the northwest.



Green lacewing adult



Green lacewing eggs

LIFE HISTORY

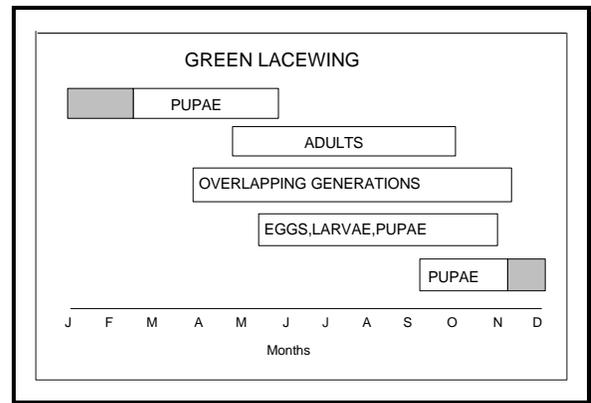
Lacewings overwinter as pupae in protected areas such as cracks in the soil, under loose bark, and in trash. In warmer areas, adults may be present year around. Adults emerge in early spring and begin laying eggs almost immediately on plants infested with prey. A single female may lay as many as 30 eggs per day and several hundred during her lifetime. There are five or six overlapping generations each season.



Green lacewing larva

IMPORTANCE

Adults feed on pollen, plant nectar, and aphid honeydew. Larvae feed on many soft-bodied insects, such as aphids, spider mites, immature plant bugs, thrips, and leafhoppers. Larvae have hollow, sickle-shaped mandibles used to suck fluids from their prey. Studies indicate that larvae may consume up to 75 aphids prior to pupation. Populations of lacewings often lag behind those of its prey and may not be able to satisfactorily reduce heavy infestations of pest insects. Green lacewing eggs are available from commercial insectaries and may be purchased for augmentative releases.



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