

WATCH OUT FOR THESE TWO PESTS

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Adult fourlined plant bug causing damage on sage. Photo: Ben Pomykala.

Many gardeners are reporting damage lately from two pests, the fourlined plant bug and slugs. The plant bug causes minor cosmetic damage, but slugs can be quite destructive if left unchecked.

The fourlined plant bug (*Poecilocus lineatus*) feeds on mint, basil, sage and Shasta daisies. This little insect causes sunken brown angular leaf spots that resemble disease symptoms.

The insects hatch in the spring, and the nymphs, or larval stage, are bright red with black wing pads and black dots on their abdomen. As the nymphs grow, they become reddish orange with larger wing pads with a light-colored stripe on each pad.

The adults are about 1/4-inch long and greenish yellow with four black stripes running down the wings. Their heads are orange-brown, and their legs are yellow-green. Both life stages have piercing sucking mouthparts and can cause this leaf-spotting damage.

You often do not find the pest with the damage because they do not sit still for very long. Usually, the ~~68 Q40~~ts and can cause this leaf

Choose plants and cultivars that slugs do not prefer. Set out slug traps like boards or cardboard to collect and handpick the pests. There are also organic slug baits that can be used as a last resort.

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