



Class Insecta, Insects

Order Hemiptera, True bugs

Hemiptera means “half wing” and refers to the fact that the top half of the first pair of wings is toughened and hard, while the bottom of the first pair and the second pair are membranous. Hemipterans also have piercing and sucking mouthparts; some suck plant juices and are plant pests, while others are predators and can inflict a painful bite. The order includes both crop and animal pests, as well as beneficial predators.

Bigeyed bugs

Family Lygaeidae

Description and life history: Adults are black, white or tan. They are very small and aptly named for their big, bulging eyes. Nymphs are similar to adults, but smaller, grayish, with unformed wings,

Prey species: Both adults and nymphs feed on insect eggs, aphids, mealybugs, spider mites, leafhoppers, plant bugs, whiteflies, small caterpillars, and beetle larvae. They capture and cut a hole in their victim, pumping saliva into the hole and drinking the contents. *Geocoris* species are considered important natural enemies, but are not commercially available. *Geocoris* need humid microclimates, so encourage them naturally by planting cover crops and leaving grasses tall, as in naturalized landscapes.



Geocoris species, bigeyed bug adult. (330)
Photo: John Davidson



Geocoris species, bigeyed bug adult. (330)
Photo: unknown