

Ransom Notes



them a copy of the image.

Beauty, the Beast

As I popped my eyes open this morning, my phone flashed an incredible image of the spotted lanternfly.

Blinking twice at the beauty of the contrasting colors, I immediately wanted to find one and catch a photo.

Reading on, however, I gulped. Stop! This flitting fly is 'Wanted For Invasion'. I asked myself, how could it be dangerous, with all of its beauty?

The reader was encouraged to do several things if spotting one of these bugs. Immediately take a photo. Call the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDA) (815-787-5476) and also send

The next steps of action made me sad. Crush any adult bugs. Scrape egg nests into a little box

containing some type of hand sanitizer, thus killing any future flies. Check your vehicles for signs of insects or eggs, and then spread the word to others of this invader into your life. Wow!

Kill this flitting fly? How could this tiny creature be dangerous? I certainly wanted to find one, but NO WAY would I want to annihilate this creature of God.

Apparently, upon future reading, these bugs probably will not kill plants or trees. We were urged NOT to apply pesticides, as they don't do great harm to the bug, but pesticides are generally not good for our environment. I guess these creatures are just more of a nuisance. They do, however, suck the sap out of vine and tree fruits, especially grapevines, and apple, peach, and maple trees. It doesn't really kill the plant, it just weakens it.

Beginning to relax, I wondered why Illinoisans should be warned, if no real damage. Then I found some additional information. First, these bugs secrete a sticky honeydew substance onto the trees, and probably on humans, when landing on the surface or skin. Most of us get a bit irritated when flies buzz around us, or a mosquito punctures our skin. Thus this beauty will also interfere with our ability to enjoy a walk in the woods, or backyard hotdog roast.

One other line caught my attention. Not only might humans be bothered, but apparently the agritourism industry could have some negative consequences. Who could that include? Yes, right here in Illinois and in Sangamon county, we should be alert, as vineyards and pumpkin patches may be a landing strip for these flying creatures. Pumpkins brought me to attention. The Bomke Pumpkin Patch, located west of Springfield, might be challenged. Maybe I should pay attention, and follow the advice of the IDA.

Another sneaky, deceiving charmer popped into my brain. Remember the slithering serpent who went calling in the enchanting Garden of Eden? This crafty creature seemed to charm our First Lady of the Eden Garden. We don't have a photo of this scene so long ago, so no visual is available of our subtle fellow. Eve, however, perked up her ears and followed his suggestions for a different snack from the forbidden tree. You remember, no good came from that nibble of fruit that was so pleasing to the eye.

Even Eve's partner also had a mid-morning snack. When the Lord God came visiting that evening, both knew immediately they were in trouble. End of story. God, the Creator, drove them out of the garden, but not in a royal chariot.

What a great reminder for us! Satan and sin may look quite attractive in a moment of weakness, but God's DIDA team, (Divine Intelligence Department of Accountability) will silently and swiftly record, remember, and ultimately call our attention to our weakness. Mr. A. and Eve did not ask for forgiveness. Let us remember to go humbly to our Lord, confess our goof-ups, and seek forgiveness. You could even check out Psalm 103:12.

Remember: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).