

As the weather gets warmer in North Carolina, it's clear that summer is upon us. Many people enjoy what summer brings — the warm weather, vacations and relaxing by the pool! But did you know that you could also help save North Carolina's trees while enjoying your pool this summer? The Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) and spotted lanternfly (SLF) are two invasive insects that are already found in neighboring states, South Carolina and Virginia. For the best chance of managing these pests, we need to know as soon as possible when they are here! And since they are attracted to water, they may be found in your pool filters.

ALB and SLF cause significant damage to plants. ALB weakens and eventually kills hardwood trees, primarily maples, and SLF is an incredible nuisance, feeding on the sap of many plants and weakening them. ALB can cause damage to structures if trees break as a result of weakening, especially during storms. Similarly, SLF damages plants and causes issues for numerous industries (e.g., grapevine and the wine industry), but it also creates sooty mold and a sticky mess with the honeydew that it excretes!

Early detection is critical for stopping the damage that these pests cause, so we need your help! Right now, we don't have reliable traps for either of these pests, which is why we need more people on the lookout. Thankfully, although maybe not to you, your pools can serve as huge traps. These pests are attracted to water, so they sometimes end up in pools.

Realistically, these pests could be anywhere! Even if you don't have a pool, you can still help stop ALB and SLF by being on the lookout for them. If you see them, report your sightings! It is especially helpful if you can snap a photo of the insect with an object, such as a coin or a pencil for size reference. Keep it in a sealed container. Even if you aren't completely sure that the insect is ALB or SLF, you can still submit a photo!

Check out the Poolside Pests website for more information about these insects and how you can help stop them by simply checking your pools. Poolside Pests is a collaborative program between NC State University Extension, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Plant Industry Division and the N.C. Forest Service.1:47 AM 5/18/2022