

## WESTERN DAMSEL BUG

Hemiptera:Nabidae *Nabis alternatus*

### DESCRIPTION

**Adults** are tan or grayish-brown, with piercing-sucking mouthparts and enlarged front legs for grasping their prey. They have slender bodies, and are about 8 to 12 mm long. **Nymphs** resemble adults, except they are smaller and have no wings.

### LIFE HISTORY

Damsel bugs overwinter as adults in protected places and appear in the field in May or June. Adults begin laying eggs soon after emergence. Eggs are flattened on top and are deposited in soft plant tissue. Eggs hatch into nymphs, which feed on small insects, mites, or eggs. Early instar nymphs may be found on the soil surface beneath plants and under litter near the stems. There are numerous, overlapping generations during the season.

### IMPORTANCE

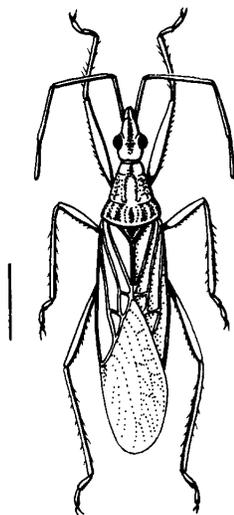
Adults and nymphs feed on many soft-bodied insects, including aphids, spider mites, leafhoppers, and small caterpillars. Adults are swift and aggressive and rapidly suck the body contents from their prey. Warm weather in the spring encourages these predators to multiply. However, cool, moist springs may allow prey populations, such as aphids, to build-up before the damsel bug population becomes large enough to provide control.



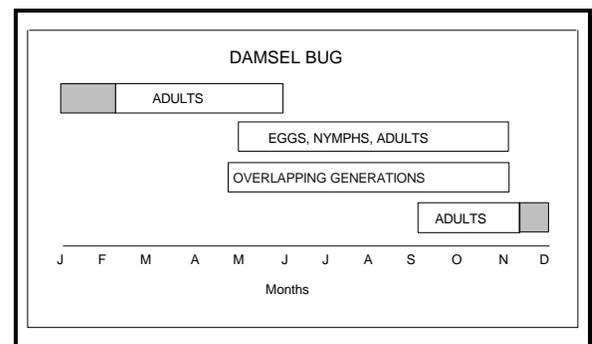
Damsel bug adult



Damsel bug nymph



Damsel bug adult



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