

piercing, sucking mouth parts which can penetrate completely through the peel of the fruit.

These insects feed on fruit and cause it to drop. While this may be severe in a single grove, it is seldom general over a wide area. The insects move into mature and nearly mature fruit from cover crops in the grove or out of adjacent fields, particularly when the ground cover is beginning to dry up or harden. Old watermelon fields and leguminous cover crops are important places of origin. Injury is most common on tangerines and early oranges and almost always occurs between September 1 and late November. The authors have seen injury so severe that 100 percent of the fruit was lost in areas larger than an acre in size. The insects may start at one margin of the grove and move across it, feeding on and causing the fruit to drop. On other occasions, when they are feeding on both the cover crop and the fruit, the losses may be less spectacular but nevertheless represent a sizable portion of the crop.

In recent years the most severe injury has been caused by the two leaf-footed plant bugs, *Leptoglossus gonagra* (Fab.) and *L. phyllopus* (L.). The former is characterized by a white line running across the prothorax

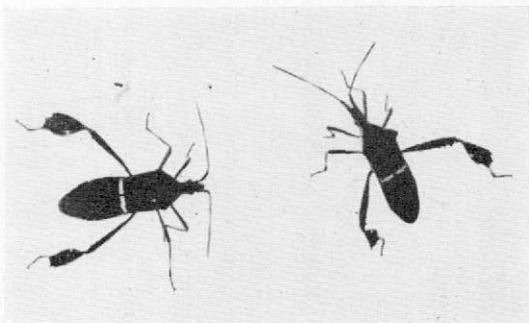


Fig. 56.—The leaf-footed plant bug, *Leptoglossus phyllopus*. Note the white band across the wings.

in front of the wings. *L. phyllopus* has a wider band, but this is located across the wings. *L. gonagra* is the more common and has been called the citron bug (48) because of the fact that it commonly builds up on melon-like citrons in groves or in old watermelon fields. In recent years this species has caused more severe damage than any of the others described in this section.

*Acanthocephala femorata* (Fab.) is a larger, more robust individual than the two mentioned above. It is occasionally found on citrus but does not appear to be of economic importance. *Anasa scorbatica* (Fab.) and *Alcaeorrhynchus grandis* (Dallas) have also been collected on citrus.

*Euthochtha galeator* (Fab.) is another member of the family