

# COMMON GREEN LACEWING

**Neuroptera: Chrysopidae**

*Chrysoperla carnea*

**Bug  
of the  
Month**



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The common green lacewing is in the insect order Neuroptera. Its name comes from their delicate nerve-like wing veins. Lacewings are common in most of North America, and found throughout the world. In our region, they begin emerging in the spring and continue to breed throughout the summer.

You may find them in their first life stage as small pale green oval eggs deposited on a silk stalk. This stalk protects against predators and eating each other when they hatch!

Once they hatch as larvae, they have long segmented brown bodies. While slightly less enchanting than their beautifully winged adult form, the alligator-like larvae have large mouth parts that they use to hunt common crop pests like aphids, thrips, and mites. This makes them important predators in agroecosystems. One single larva can eat 200-400 aphids, earning them the nickname 'aphid lions.'

Larvae will form a silken cocoon and then emerge about 2 weeks later in their stunning adult

form with large oval wings, long antennae, and golden eyes. Adults are not predators as they feed on pollen and nectar. Lacewing adults are least active during the day, so keep your eye out in the evenings for these fantastic insects.

The common green lacewing is just one of many species found on milkweed. To learn more about the insect community found on milkweed, visit the Center for Pollinator Research Website.



[pollinators.psu.edu](http://pollinators.psu.edu)

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**June 2024**



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