

White Spot Assassin Bug

Platymeris biguttatus



Physical Characteristics

- Physical description: Body with three segments. Six legs, four wings. Also has a long mouthpart called a proboscis.
- Coloration: Adults have a black body with two large white spots on the wings. Legs are black with red bands. Young have a red body with yellow on their upper legs when they first hatch.

Size

- Length: Male: 1.3 inches (3.3 cm). Female: 1.3-1.4 inches (3.3-4 cm)

Lifespan

- Wild: Unknown
- Zoos: About 1 year

Behaviors

- Activity Cycle: Diurnal
- Lifestyle: Terrestrial
- Social Structure: Form loose colonies. Adults hunt and eat alone, then come back to the group.

Diet

- Wild: Insects and other invertebrates
- Zoo: Crickets and mealworms

Reproduction

- Incubation Period: About 4-6 weeks
- Clutch Size: 1 egg

Habitat and Range

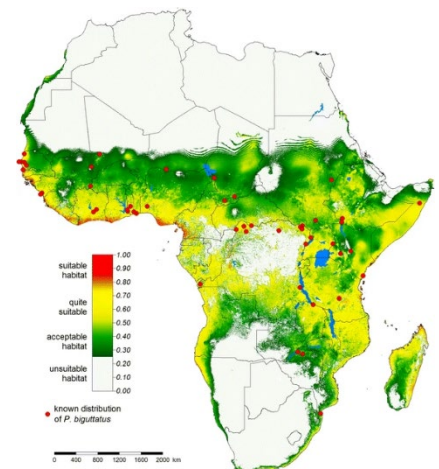
- Habitat: Tropical savannahs with grasses and shrubs.
- Range: Many countries along the coast and in the tropical center of Africa, including Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique.

Conservation

- IUCN Status: Not assessed by IUCN
- Contributing factors: While these insects may not be assessed, their habitat has threats to face. The tropical savannas are greatly affected by climate change and agriculture, which can lead to desertification.

Classification

- Kingdom: Animalia
- Phylum: Arthropoda
- Class: Insecta
- Order: Hemiptera
- Family: Reduviidae
- Genus: *Platymeris*
- Species: *P. biguttatus*



Interesting Facts

- The two large white spots on their wings are a form of aposematism, where an animal has bright colors to warn predators that they are toxic.
- White spot assassin bugs use their long proboscis to feed on their prey. They will pierce their prey with their proboscis and suck the insides up.
- Females lay a single egg at a time in dirt as opposed to a nest like other insects.