

## How to safely handle a kissing bug

- DON'T** squish it
- DON'T** touch it with bare hands
- DO** use a glove, paper towel, or plastic bag to pick it up
- DO** place it in a sealed bag or container

*\*Always wash your hands afterwards*



This *Triatoma sanguisuga* was recently found in Delaware  
*\*Enlarged to show detail*

The IDEAS Lab at University of Delaware is studying kissing bugs!

Although kissing bugs spread a human parasite, they have never been studied in the northeastern US... until now!

We are studying kissing bugs in Delaware to understand the public health risk that they pose in our state.

**If you find a kissing bug, you can help by saving it and contacting us at:**

[KissingBugsDE@gmail.com](mailto:KissingBugsDE@gmail.com)

## Questions?

**Found a Kissing Bug?**

**Contact Us At:**

[KissingBugsDE@gmail.com](mailto:KissingBugsDE@gmail.com)

## IDEAS Lab

This informational pamphlet is brought to you by the *Infectious Disease Entomology Across Scales* Laboratory of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology

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UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
**AGRICULTURE &  
NATURAL RESOURCES**

# Kissing Bugs in Delaware

## IDENTIFICATION GUIDE



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# Is it a Kissing Bug?

## What is a kissing bug?

Kissing bugs are insects that feed on blood from animals and people. They are native to Delaware and live in wooded areas.

## Why care about kissing bugs?

Kissing bugs carry a **parasite** that causes a disease called **Chagas disease**. Chagas disease can lead to serious **heart problems**.



An adult Kissing Bug is ~ 1 inch long  
\*shown lifesize

## How can I protect myself?

Kissing bugs spread the Chagas parasite through their **poop** and **NOT their bite**. For this reason, **don't squish kissing bugs!** If you want to kill a kissing bug, put it in a paper towel or plastic bag first.

## What if a kissing bug bites me?

**Don't panic**- the risk of getting Chagas disease is extremely low. Save the bug if possible! The bug can be tested for the Chagas parasite. Contact the **IDEAS Lab**.

YES!

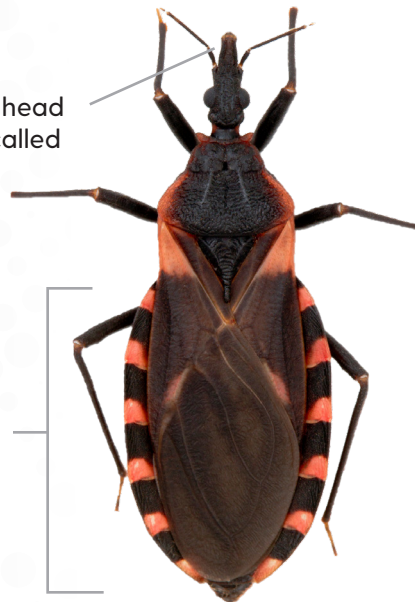


Mouthpart like a syringe

Kissing Bugs have slender sucking mouth parts used to stealthily bite their hosts.

Cone Nose

The Kissing Bug's head is long and thin, called a "cone nose".



Six orange spots or stripes on the edge of its back.

\*Enlarged to show detail

NO!



North American Wheel Bug

Orange Assassin Bug



Western Conifer Seed Bug



Milkweed Bug



Boxelder Bug