

# Insect Fact Sheet

## Shieldbugs

Shieldbugs are common insects that have an interesting life history. Although Shieldbugs do lay eggs (like most other insects) they do not go through completely different stages of growth in the same way butterflies and moths do. Young Shieldbugs are called nymphs and as they grow, they have to shed their skins several times as they out-grow their old one. Skin changes are known as 'moult' and nymphs do not become fully grown until they have moulted four or five times.

### Life cycle stages



The UK has around 30 species of Shieldbugs. In the past few years, there have been several new species arrive here from Europe.

Shieldbugs vary in what they eat. Some species such as the Green

Shieldbug and the Hawthorn Shieldbug feed on sap and the juices of plants. Other species are predators, feeding on other insects.

A few species are known to protect their young from danger. The Parent Bug is perhaps the best known of these, with the nymphs following in a line behind the female around the branches of trees and bushes.

Look for Shieldbugs and their nymphs in gardens, parks, woods and along hedgerows.

Egg



Young Nymph



Older Nymph



Adult

