

LEAFHOPPERS, PLANTHOPPERS

Leafhoppers and planthoppers make up one of the largest groups of plant-feeding insects. There are more leafhopper species worldwide than all species of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians combined. Leafhoppers feed by sucking the sap of plants and are found almost anywhere plants occur, from tropical rainforests to arctic tundra.

Leafhoppers range in size and usually live for only a few months. Leafhoppers injure plants either directly through feeding (which can damage plant tissue and rob the plant of essential nutrients) or indirectly by transmitting viruses.



SIZE |——|
Up to ½ inch

Because leafhoppers are one of the most common and abundant groups of insects, they are an important food source for both vertebrate predators, such as birds and lizards, and invertebrate predators such as spiders, assassin bugs, wasps, and robber flies. Leafhoppers are also killed by parasitic wasps and flies.

Image from
Information from Illinois Natural History at
www.inhs.uiuc.edu/~dietrich/Leafhome.html

Picture from
<http://www.richard-seaman.com/Wallpaper/Nature/Bugs/>