



CONENOSE BUGS (TRIATOMINES) IN CALIFORNIA

Also called kissing bugs, chinchas, and many other names

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF CONENOSE BUGS

Triatomines have **straight, thin** mouthparts – not curved or thick mouthparts, which many look-alikes have.



Conenose bug

NOT a conenose bug

Actual size
13–23 mm
0.5–0.9 in



About the size
of a penny

Pointed
"cone-nose"

Almost completely
black/dark brown

Very light, thin
stripes around the
outer edge of the
border of the
abdomen

Legs thin along
their length –
no wider parts,
no spikes



KEY FACTS ABOUT CONENOSE BUGS

- The most commonly encountered species in California is the 'western conenose bug' (*Triatoma protracta*)
- All life stages and both sexes feed on blood throughout their lives.
- They are mostly active at dusk/night, and adults are attracted to lights.
- They may carry the parasite (*Trypanosoma cruzi*) that can cause Chagas disease in humans and other animals.
- In California, a greater risk than Chagas disease is the development of an allergic reaction (sometimes severe) to their bites.
- They hatch from eggs, pass through 5 wingless nymphal stages, and molt into adults. This takes about one year. Adults have wings and can fly.



This is a nymph stage of the conenose bug. Note the lack of wings.

Photo credit: Dan Horner



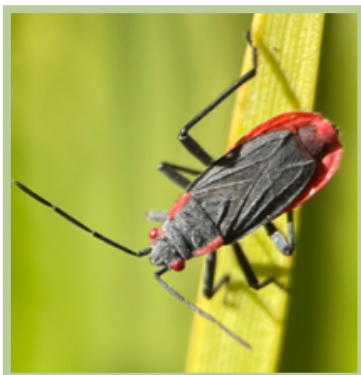
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Insects that are **NOT** conenose bugs



Red-shoulder bug



Assassin bug
(example, there are many)



Leaf-footed bug
(example, there are many)



Brown marmorated
stink bug



Mediterranean red bug



Box elder bug



Bedbug

People are often concerned that large numbers of bugs on a plant may be conenose bugs – they are not. This is the behavior of many other types of insects.

All images (CC0) from iNaturalist users: 'ethologist' (red-shouldered bug and box elder bug), 'quillipede' (assassin bug), 'mortiz' (leaf-footed bug), 'wildreturn' (brown marmorated stink bug), 'glmory' (Mediterranean red bug), 'danielas' (nymphs on plant); Shutterstock image (bedbug)



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