

Wheel Bug

Arilus cristatus

Family: Reduviidae

Size: 1 1/8" to 1 3/8" (28-36 mm)

Range: Ontario and New York south to Florida, west to Kansas and New Mexico and into Mexico



J.R. Baker
NC State University

Close-up showing the "cog" on the thorax.

From summer through fall, you can find Wheel Bugs near trees and shrubs in gardens, parks, and woodland edges. This unmistakable insect can be positively identified by the spiked half "cogwheel" jutting from the thorax. Considered beneficial by some, this bug's insatiable appetite is made up of garden pests such as fall webworm and cabbageworm. They also feast on a host of other pests. They have a unique mouthpart that they use to pierce their prey and inject a potent saliva. Once rendered helpless, they suck the liquids from their food.

More Information: http://go.ncsu.edu/wheel_bug

Reference:

Evans, Arthur V., (2008). *National Wildlife Federation Field Guide to Insects and Spiders of North America*. Andrew Stewart Publishing ed. Pg. 120

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