

Eastern Lubber Grasshopper: *Romalea guttata* (or *Romalea microptera*)



There is only one species of Lubber Grasshopper in the eastern United States and only a few species occur in North America. Lubber grasshoppers are large, colorful and usually bear short wings that are too small to use for flight or even for long jumping. The Lubber Grasshopper has many defensive warnings. The first is its brightly colored warning pattern known as aposematism. When disturbed, they may hiss and spread their wings and even emit a foul-smelling and foul-tasting foamy secretion from the thorax.

Like all insects, the Lubber Grasshopper goes through several stages of development. Initially, while in the small nymph stage, it is wingless and completely black with one or more yellow, orange or red stripes. In the adult stage, they reach 2.5–3 in. in length with wings half as long. Their appearance can range from a dull yellow often characterized by black spots and markings, a bright orange with black markings, or entirely black with yellow or red striping. In the black adult color phase, this grasshopper is widely known throughout Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama as the “Devil’s Horse.” All are opportunistic eaters, meaning this species will eat anything they come across.

