

Soldier Beetles

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Soldier beetles are quite common throughout Kansas and I've noticed them lately in my flowers and garden. They are most commonly noticed in late summer as the adults are highly mobile, relatively large, and are very active searching for and feeding on pollen. Thus, they can be very common on any crop, or weed, that is pollinating, especially sunflowers, sorghum, and cucurbits such as cantaloupes and watermelons. Soldier beetles are often mistaken for blister beetles because of their size and shape but are not in the same taxonomic family and thus, produce no cantharidin, the chemical that causes external blisters in humans and causes other problems in livestock when ingested. Soldier beetles are harmless.

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