



## Wandering the Woods with Matt

Leaf-footed bugs  
(Family Coreidae)

Observed November 2020

The observation of the week for November 13<sup>th</sup> is leaf-footed bugs. These are true bugs in the order Hemiptera and rather large in size (ranging from about 7 mm to 45 mm). The striking feature about this group is that the hind legs are modified to be either grossly thickened or with leaf-like appendages. The relatively large family (1900 species) is distributed worldwide, with the greatest diversity in the tropics.

Species found locally tend to be brownish or blackish in color with relatively modest modifications to the hind legs.

Tropical species can be much more dramatic, e.g.:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/16092583>

and

<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/16092701>

Some species exhibit parental care of offspring with the males carrying eggs on their backs. This has been shown to greatly reduce parasitism of the eggs.

On our unseasonably warm days this week, I saw *Leptoglossus oppositus* at two locations – the Learn Preserve in Tannersville and Pomeroy Nature Preserve near Stroudsburg. Like all Coreidae, this species is an herbivore and feeds by sucking sap from plants. It is a generalist feeder, having been reported feeding on a wide range of plants, including tomato, tulip tree, and catalpa.