

A Chinese Mantid at MY House!

by Carol Ann Harlos

I looked out my screened kitchen window and saw an absolutely huge praying mantid! I grabbed my iPad and ran outdoors. There was a 5 ½ inch long praying mantid on the screen! I took pictures. It was a Chinese mantid *Tenodera aridifolia*. It had a long slender brown body, brown eyes, a triangular head, extraordinary forelegs, and a green abdomen. Apart from its size I noted that the wings extended the full length of the abdomen whereas the wings of the Carolina mantid, our native species, extend only about two thirds the length of the abdomen. It had a square forehead whereas the native mantid has a rectangular forehead. I stood there in awe as it turned its head half way around its body! Now this is an invasive species. I should have killed it or at least put it into my killing jar for pinning later. I was so excited that I just stood there in awe.

The Chinese praying mantid was accidentally introduced near Philadelphia in 1896! This mantid out competes our native mantid species which it also devours. The Chinese praying mantid can eat grasshoppers, flies, arachnids, even small birds! Like other mantid species the female often eats her mate after mating. [Editor's note: People often use mantis when they may mean mantid. Mantid refers to the entire group or order Mantodea while mantis refers to a specific genus Mantis which includes the European mantid

(*Mantis religiosa*) believed to be first introduced into the Rochester, NY area also in the late 1800s.] To learn more:

<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/praying-mantids/>

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/what-s-that-bug-identifying-the-praying-mantids-of-michigan>



Photo by Carol Ann Harlos



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