

## CLOVER MITES



### DESCRIPTION

These mites are smaller than a pinhead, usually bright red, and have front legs that are as long as the body and much longer than the other six legs. These front legs characteristically extend forward from the body.

### BIOLOGY

Adults lay eggs inside of cracks in concrete foundations, between walls of buildings, and on the underside of basal bark on trees. The mature mites frequently spend the winter in the exterior of houses. They are inactive during cold weather as well as during the very hot weather of mid-summer. During brief periods of warm weather, they migrate both to

the outside walls of the house and to the inside, particularly on the south side of the building since it may be much warmer closer to the building than the surrounding air temperature. They usually are noticed around windows, but they may soon overrun the entire home. Heavy migrations into the house are common both in the early summer and in the fall. The clover mite does not feed exclusively on clovers. It attacks a number of grasses and certain other plants found in yards. Migration into homes is triggered by population pressures or by the onset of unfavourable feeding conditions that may occur during periods of drought or at the onset of cold weather.

### HABITS

The clover mite often becomes a serious household pest, especially in situations where new lawns have been established and where there is a heavy growth of succulent, well-fertilized grass close to foundation walls. They often occur in extremely large numbers, and although they do not bite or cause any damage indoors, they are extremely annoying and leave red stains when crushed.

### CONTROL

Successful control of clover mites depends upon the thoroughness of the application of a properly labelled insecticide. Although these mites may be kept away from a structure by placing a plant-free band of pea gravel or coarse sand 18-24 inches wide around the foundation, this is not generally a means of control that is acceptable to the homeowner.



A number of insecticides are quite effective for clover mite control but these must be applied to a band of lawn area 20 feet wide around the house as well as to the foundation and outside walls of the building. The secret of success is a very thorough treatment. For indoor control, the use of a labeled residual insecticide is effective. Treatments should be made to baseboards, around windows, the area between the screens or storm windows and the sash, and other entry points.

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