

PHORID FLIES

DESCRIPTION

Adults are approximately 1/64 to 1/4" long with a humpbacked appearance in lateral view. Phorid flies can be yellowish, black or brown in colour. They have short antennae, with two very small basal segments, and the 3rd segment globular with a long bristle. Wings have strong, heavily pigmented veins in the front area, and the remaining veins are weak and without cross-veins. Larvae measure up to 3/8", are spindle-shaped with projections on rear segments and shorter, broader projections dorsally. Larval colour is white, yellow-white or grayish.



BIOLOGY

Females lay their eggs either onto or into drains with layers of film or organic matter, with 1-100 being laid at one time and up to 750 in her lifetime. There are 3 larval instars. During the 3rd instar, larva crawls to a drier area to pupate.

HABITS

Adults can often be found around flowers or on larval food materials which consist of moist, decaying organic matter. Because they frequent such unsanitary places, they may transport various disease-causing organisms to food materials. They are of great concern in health-care facilities because of their unsanitary habits, and because larvae have been found in the open wounds of patients.

Larvae develop in a wide variety of moist decaying organic matter which includes dung, fungi, and decomposing plant material. Their developmental materials can include the moist organic film lining of drain pipes, the moist residue in the bottom of trash cans, in elevator pits, garbage disposals, dirty, moist mop heads, etc. In offices, over-watered plants are often the source. Other sources can be the fresh-cut flowers in vases, soiled bedding materials in the bottom of animal cages, boot polish, glue paint, and leaky sewage pipes.

CONTROL

Follow the 5 basic steps of identification, inspection, sanitation, mechanical control/exclusion and insecticide application, if required. The key is finding and eliminating all of the development sources. A residual insecticide is rarely required, though after the development sources have been eliminated, a non-residual insecticide can be used to kill the adults present. A drain cleaning maintenance program may be needed with use of enzymes to destroy the development site.

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