

PEST CONTROL BULLETIN NO. 9

CLOVER MITES

Bryobia praetiosa Koch



▣ Actual Size

GENERAL INFORMATION

These mites (1/32 inch or .75mm long) feed only on plants and do not bite humans or animals. However, their presence in large numbers may be a source of great annoyance. This tiny, eight-legged mite may be identified by its comparatively long front legs extending forward about as long or longer than its body. The body varies in color from reddish-brown to green and the legs are amber or orange. The newly hatched clover mites are bright red.

Migrating clover mites are most frequently encountered in the spring or late winter. Migration may be attendant with drying up or destruction of weed hosts adjacent to dwellings but in many cases the reason for migration is not apparent. Whatever the cause, in the course of these migrations the mites invade living quarters and remedial action is often desired.

Clover mites infest a wide variety of plants including wild or cultivated grasses, dichondra, clover, Malva, and numerous weeds, shrubs and trees (especially some deciduous fruits). In southern California active mites may be found throughout the winter feeding on various plants in uncultivated areas near homes. They may start migrating with the first warm weather of spring.

CONTROL

Satisfactory control of migrating clover mites in typical cases involves two separate procedures:

1. Control movement of the migrating mites by destroying them at their source on their overwintering hosts and along the paths of entrance; and
2. Control of the population within the house.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

Outside: Treat areas to a distance of 20-25 feet from the house including the walls, window sills, walks, etc. Material should penetrate cracks, crevices, and other quarters where mites are found. High pressure sprays are usually more effective than dusts, but either is successful if used with persistence and thoroughness. Hose applicators are satisfactory if proper dosage is used. Care should be taken to select a material that will not injure foliage or stain painted surfaces or involve toxicity hazards. Contamination of fish ponds should be avoided. The avenues of entrance into the dwelling, such as window sills and door thresholds, should be thoroughly treated.

Inside: Chemical control within the dwelling may be advantageous after careful selection of safe material and application. Vacuum cleaning with brushless attachments has proven very useful.

None of the suggested procedures for interior control is sufficient in providing relief from infestations unless accompanied by control outside the dwelling.

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This information is provided to help homeowners with their pest problems. Insecticides may be purchased at nurseries, hardware, farm supply, and pet stores. If additional help is needed, contact with a registered pest control operator is suggested.

No endorsement of trade names or products is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.

PRECAUTIONS

1. Handle insecticides with care and follow instructions on the label.

2. Do not use around open flame or exposed foods, and always clean food preparation areas after the use of pesticides.
3. Store out of reach of children and pets, preferably in locked cabinets.
4. Never keep pesticides in anything other than the original container.
5. Never reuse the pesticide container to store any other materials.
6. Dispose of all empty containers properly by placing them in the trash can for removal to the local disposal area.



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