



Cigarette Beetles Identification and Biology

By DoMyOwn staff

Cigarette Beetles can be found throughout the year, but appear most frequently in the fall and winter months. They are often introduced into homes on the petals of dried flower arrangements.

Cigarette Beetle Identification

The Cigarette Beetle is small and squat (about 1/8" in length), and shiny reddish- or yellowish- brown in color. Antennae are serrated. Larvae are creamy white in color with a brown head.

Feeding Preferences

The list of the Cigarette Beetles' preferred snacks seems almost endless, but the adult beetles are best known for their tendency to infest stored tobacco. Other common preferences of the larval stages include rice, raisins, pepper, ginger, dates, seeds, drugs, dried fish, processed grain products, and rodent baits. Surprisingly, they also feed on pyrethrum powder that is strong enough to kill a roach!

Life Cycle

The female Cigarette Beetle can lay up to 100 eggs at once. These are deposited in or near the infested food supply. Wormlike larvae reach full maturity in about 40 days. The lifespan of a Cigarette Beetle lasts about 50 days, with 3 to 6 generations occurring in one year.

Damage

Cigarette beetles are the most destructive pest in stored tobacco. They also cause serious damage to book bindings and pages, botanical herbs, and silk.

Prevention and Control of Cigarette Beetles

- The best method to prevent product pest infestation is careful sanitation. Pantry shelves should be kept free of crumbs and stickiness.
- If you do locate an infested package, get rid of it immediately. The pantry or infested area can then be cleaned with soapy water, and the cracks and crevices vacuumed.
- When purchasing foods, check the packaging date to ensure freshness.
- Do not purchase food packages that look opened or damaged.
- Utilize several pantry pest traps in and around the infested area.

Products

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