



*Greenhouse & Nursery*

# Twospotted Spider Mite

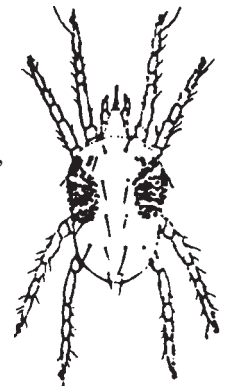
Pest Fact Sheet **15**

### Introduction

Several species of spider mites invade field, garden, greenhouse, nursery, and ornamental plants. The most troublesome of these spider mites is the Twospotted Spider Mite, *Tetranychus urticae*, (Koch). This mite removes the sap from the leaf tissue, leaving the leaf speckled. When severely infested, the entire plant may die.

### Description

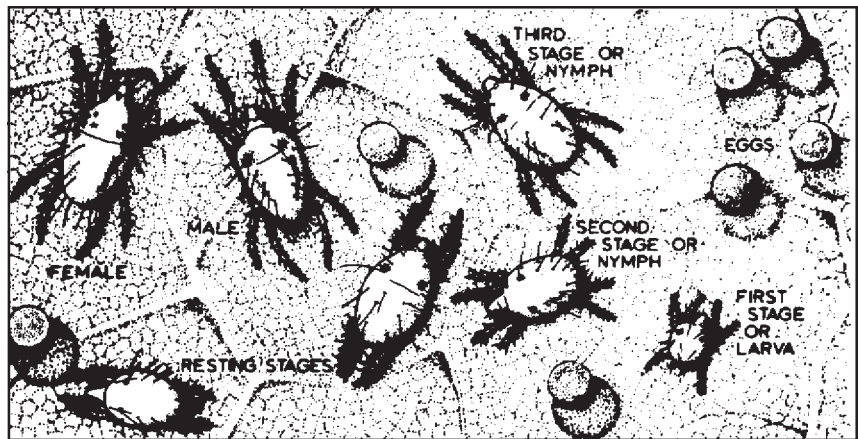
The eggs are spherical, clear to pale green in color, and shiny. They are usually found on the underside of the leaves where adult feeding occurs. They are attached to the leaves in the webbing spun by the adults.



*Adult Female*

The first instar is a six-legged stage called a larva and is similar in shape and color to the adult.

The adult is an eight-legged mite, ranging in color from green to brown. The male is smaller than the female, and has a narrower, pointed abdomen. Both sexes have sparse spines and two dark pigmented areas on the back. These pigmented areas are food particles which can be seen through the body wall. The twospotted spider mite is quite small with the adult female averaging 0.5 mm in length.



Life stages of two-spotted spider mite  
from *Insects and Related Pests of Flowers and Foliage Plants*.  
Cameron-Carter, Cathy, et al. 1978. North Carolina Extension Service.

### Life Cycle

This non-insect pest goes through four stages of development: egg, larva, nymph, and adult.

After being deposited, the egg will hatch in 3-19 days, depending upon temperatures. After hatching, the 6-legged larva will immediately start to feed on the leaves. It will later change into an 8-legged stage, and then to an adult in about 19 days. Continual feeding occurs during this time.

There are several continuous generations per year in greenhouses. This mite overwinters outdoors as an adult female in New Hampshire. Spider mites are often a severe problem in hot, dry weather.

### Control

Miticides usually control only the adults and nymphs, not the eggs. A second spray should be considered in 7-10 days after the first to control recently hatched nymphs. Thorough spray coverage is necessary. Apply only to plants and site listed on the label. Consult your county Extension Educator (see county office telephone listing below) for specific pesticide recommendations.


### Summary

Damaging stage	All active stages
Plant parts attacked	Leaves
Overwintering stage	All stages in the greenhouse; in nursery, adult females
Number of generations per year	Several outdoors; many indoors
Time of year when damage is done	<b>Outdoors:</b> Late May-Early June; Late July - Early August <b>Indoors:</b> Year round
Number of pesticide applications per year	1 - 2 per generation, 7-10 days apart, depending on weather

### UNH Cooperative Extension County Office Telephone Numbers

<b>Belknap</b> (603) 527-5475	<b>Carroll</b> (603) 539-3331	<b>Cheshire</b> (603) 352-4550	<b>Coos</b> (603) 788-4961	<b>Grafton</b> (603) 787-6944
<b>Hillsborough</b> Goffstown (603) 641-6060	<b>Merrimack</b> (603) 796-2151	<b>Rockingham</b> Brentwood, NH 03833 (603) 679-5616	<b>Strafford</b> (603) 749-4445	<b>Sullivan</b> (603) 863-9200

*Stop! It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. Contact the NH Division of Pesticide Control at (603) 271-3550 to check registration status. Store pesticides in their original containers in a locked cabinet or shed away from food. Dispose of unused pesticides or empty containers safely, according to NH regulations. If you suspect pesticide poisoning, call the New Hampshire Poison Control Center at 1-800-562-8236.*

  
**Stanley R. Swier**  
*Extension Specialist, Entomology*

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