

HOME GROUNDS FACT SHEET

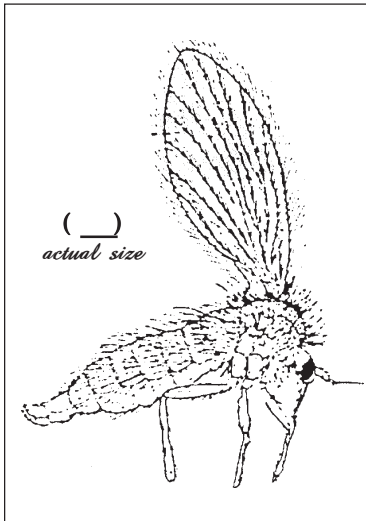


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Moth Fly



Moth fly, drain fly, filterfly or sewage fly are the common names of *Psychods alternata*, a small (2mm long) gray-colored fly that sometimes seems to appear suddenly from sink and bathtub drains in the home. The body and wings of this insect are densely covered with fuzz, giving it a somewhat moth-like appearance.

The larvae and pupae live on the gelatinous-like film that covers the filter stones of sewage filter plants. When the flies reach maturity, the flies are sometimes borne by the wind to nearby homes, where they can enter through screen openings.

In the home, the immature stages may live in the gelatinous-like lining of the water-free portion of the wash basins, often in the over-flow drain. When the adult matures, the flies can be found emerging from the basin and flying around the house.

The moth flies may go through their life cycle in 1 to 3 weeks and the adults can live for about 2 weeks after emerging. They are not strong fliers and are often seen crawling over walls or other surfaces. When they do fly, they cover only a few feet at a time and fly in a jerky line. The adults may be attracted to lights. Out-of-doors, these flies are common in shady places near water. They are often found in large numbers resting on dense foliage in marshlands. The larvae are aquatic or semi-aquatic, as are the pupae.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Considerations

IPM is a common sense approach to pest control and plant care. It employs a number of measures to prevent, control or reduce problems. Always use the least toxic methods first.

A good mechanical control, in many instances, is to vacuum the insects and then throw the bag away. Regarding household pests, in addition to regular house-cleaning, the best preventive method is to monitor the home, i.e. note any cracks in foundations, air spaces between windows and frames, poorly-fitting doors, moisture from leaks, etc., and correct such examples/situations.

Control

Control is best obtained by cleaning out the source of the infestation. Use a bottle brush to clean out the gelatinous-like lining of drain pipes. Pay special attention to the area between the overflow drain and the main drain. The pipes may have to be disconnected and cleaned.

If a spray is used, a household insecticide spray labeled for flies may be used to control adult moth flies.

"This publication contains pesticide recommendations. Changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly and human errors are still possible. Some materials mentioned may no longer be available, and some uses may no longer be legal. All pesticides distributed, sold or applied in New York State must be registered with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Questions concerning the legality and/or registration status for pesticide use in New York State should be directed to the appropriate Cornell Cooperative Extension specialist or your regional DEC office (631) 444-0340. Read the label before applying any pesticide. Cornell Cooperative Extension and its employees assume no liability for the effectiveness or results of any chemicals for pesticide usage. No endorsement of products is made or implied."

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