



Webbing Clothes Moths

(Lepidoptera: Tineidae)



The Webbing clothes moth is the most common fabric infesting moth we encounter. The adult moths are 1/4 inch long and golden buff or yellowish grey with a satiny sheen. The hairs on its head are upright and reddish. The larvae are pearly white and 3/8 inch long.

Adult females lay up to 200 eggs. Incubation takes from three days to three weeks or longer. The larval and pupal stages combined may take 45 days to a year to complete. Adult male moths fly more often than females, but both can fly considerable distances and can move from building to building in close urban environments in favorable weather.

The most important factor in managing these pest is finding the source. A careful inspection of all areas is critical. Clothes moth larvae will attack clothing, carpets, furs, blankets, upholstery, brush bristles and a myriad of other items. They will also feed on synthetic fabrics and fabrics from botanical sources if they are mixed with wool. Also removal of animal nests is required. Fabric damaging pests will sometimes move into abandoned nests from birds, rodents, bats, bees and wasps as well as the carcasses of dead animals.

Control and prevention consists of vacuuming to remove all organic debris from cracks and crevasses. Animal borne fabrics must be dry cleaned thoroughly before being stored. These items are to be stored in tightly closed containers. Three consecutive complete applications of an adulticide and IGR (Insect Growth Regulator) is required in all closets, dressers and other areas where these fabrics are stored as well as treatment of oriental rugs and other keratin based textiles is required.

Please call for additional information.

© 2007 Environmental Health Services, Inc.