

# APHIDS<sup>2</sup>

## Damage symptoms

These insects suck sap, causing stunted and distorted plant tissue. New foliage and flowers are often malformed. Plant growth is stunted when populations are high. Some species transmit viruses, including the mosaics. Aphids exude a sweet, sticky, honeydew substance, which gives leaves a shiny appearance. Black sooty mold may grow on this honeydew, covering the plant surfaces.

## Plants commonly attacked

A wide variety of plants, too numerous to list.

## General characteristics

Aphids have soft, round, or oval bodies, about  $\frac{1}{8}$ <sup>th</sup> inch long. At the tail end are two slender tubes called cornicles. Adults and immatures live and feed together and look similar except immatures are smaller and are always wingless. Most species do not lay eggs, but give birth to live young. The life cycle is completed rapidly and populations can increase quickly because aphids reproduce asexually. Aphids cannot be identified based on their color alone.

## Mouthparts: Piercing/sucking

## Where to find aphids

Aphids can be on any part of the plant but are often on the undersides of leaves feeding along the vein or on the leaf surface. Some species are found on the succulent new growth, while others prefer the lower part of the plant. Look carefully for aphids as they are small and sometimes secretive and their color blends in with the plant. Small white flecks are the remains of the insects' cast skin, left after molting. Don't mistake them for live ones when scouting. Plant inspection is essential because sticky cards catch only the winged forms.

## Management

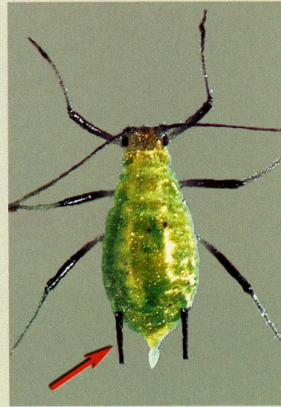
- ✓ Identify the species, because some reproduce more rapidly than others.
- ✓ Treat aphids early before populations increase and spread.
- ✓ Parasites, predators and insect-killing fungi are available.
- ✓ Several biorational insecticides are also effective.

<sup>2</sup> Several species are important pests including: *Myzus persicae* (green peach aphid), *Aphis gossypii* (cotton aphid), and *Macrosiphum euphorbiae* (potato aphid) [Homoptera: Aphidae]. Send to a specialist for species identification if necessary.





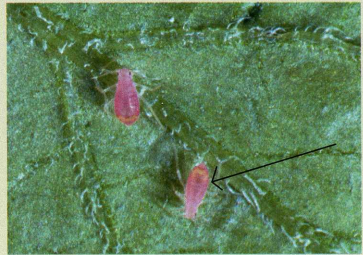
*Green peach aphid on a rose bud.*



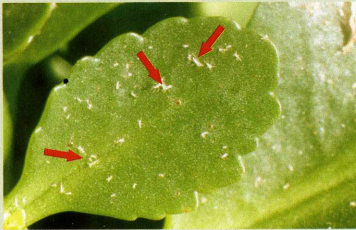
*Adult potato aphid.  
Arrow points to cornicle,  
a feature for identification.*



*Aphids on underside of a leaf.*



*Immature potato aphids.*



*Cast skins of aphids.*



*Aphids feeding within  
flower cluster.*



*Honeydew excreted by aphids  
makes leaf surface shiny. Sooty  
mold often grows on the honeydew.*