

COMMON GREENHOUSE PESTS

- FUNGUS GNATS -



Fungus gnat adult.

Fungus gnats (*Bradysia* sp.) are one of the most common pests observed in greenhouses year round, especially on sticky cards. They normally cause little damage to full grown plants, but can cause substantial damage to young plants, cuttings, and seedling flats. Fungus gnats are typically found in damp and humid greenhouse conditions. Adults feed on algae growing on soil or floor surfaces and their larvae, on plant roots. Root feeding can cause damage to the plant causing wilting and allowing for the entry for numerous plant pathogens.

Life Cycle

Fungus gnats lay their eggs in the top layer of potted soil. The eggs hatch within 4 days. They go through 4 larval stages that are all similar in appearance except for size. Pupation then occurs and an adult emerges. The typical life cycle (egg to adult) takes approximately 3 – 6 weeks depending on temperature.

Identification

Adult fungus gnats resemble mosquitoes. They are small blackish brown flies (0.08 - 0.2 in long). They have dark transparent wings, long antennae and fine legs. Larvae are long (0.2 – 0.5 in long), transparent and have a distinct black head. Potato wedges placed on potted soil surfaces for 3 days or more make a great larvae monitoring tool.



Fungus gnat larvae