Predatory Mites: Mite-ier Than Other Pest Controls!

Emma Giancola- Ornamental Extension Entomology Intern
Brian Kunkel- Ornamentals IPM Extension Specialist University of Delaware

The Problem

- Spider mites
- Cyclamen mites
- Broad mites
- Rust & other eriophyid mites
- Bulb mites
- Thrips
- Whiteflies
- Scale insects

![Image of a plant with spider mite damage]

Figure 1 (Above): two-spotted spider mite infestation on a rose. Spider mites cause leaf damage and leave behind webbing. Photo credit: Emma Giancola.

The above species can harm or cause visible damage (Figure 1) to plants. Pest mites use piercing/sucking mouthparts to feed on plants and can spread rapidly from plant to plant. This damage can injure or kill plants.

These pests can be controlled with pesticides, or...

Solution: Predatory Mites!

Common Genera
- Phytoseiulus
- Amblyseius
- Neoseiulus

Other Genera
- Metaseiulus
- Galendromus
- Over 2,500 other species of predatory mites!

They Will Eat
- All life stages of their mite prey
- Eggs and immatures of non-mite prey

![Image of a predatory mite]

Figure 2 (Above): Predatory mite Phytoseiulus persimilis, used to target spider mites (Tetranychus urticae). Photo credit: Koppert, Spidex Vital

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What Do They Look Like?

Predatory mite appearance (use a hand lens):

As Eggs
- Small, on the underside of leaves
- Spherical
- Opaque or colored

As Larvae
- 6 Legs

As Nymphs
- Slightly larger than larvae, 8 legs

As Adults
- Extremely tiny, round, spotted bodies (females rounder than males), 8 legs
- Generally, green color when smashed/streaked

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How Do I Use Them?

Getting Predatory Mites

- Encourage naturally by using an untouched plant reservoir
- Purchase sachets of predators
- May need to be reintroduced if they leave after decimating the prey population

Keeping Predatory Mites

- Avoid use of broad-spectrum insecticides
- This will kill the predators along with the pests!