



Kimberly Schofield
Program Specialist- IPM
k-schofield@tamu.edu

Pest Check

Presence of Shore flies

Shore flies are usually found in greenhouses, since they are attracted to algae growing on potting soil and under greenhouse benches. However, they can be found on house plants as well. Shore flies are frequently confused with fungus gnats, since they are usually found together. However shore flies have short antennae, a large head with red eyes, and smoky gray wings with 5 white spots on each wing. Also shore flies are stronger, faster fliers than fungus gnats.

Female shore flies will lay eggs singly on the surface of algae. The eggs will hatch in about 2 to 3 days. Shore fly larvae are $\frac{1}{8}$ inches in length, with a brownish-yellow, legless body. The larvae lack a distinct head capsule, but their dark mouthparts and internal organs may be visible. The larvae feed on algae growing on the surface of the potting mix. The larvae mature in 3 to 6 days and then pupate. The pupae are also found close to the soil surface. The adult fly will emerge 4 to 5 days later and it will feed on the same material as the larvae. The adult fly usually stays close to the breeding sites.

Eventhough the shore fly adult and larva do not feed on plants, they still can present problems. Adults can be a problem, since they can transmit plant pathogens, such as *Pythium* and other root disease organisms. Also shore flies produce excrement that can land on foliage, leaving unsightly black specks.

Some Control Options

Non-Chemical Control Options:

To reduce shore fly numbers avoid over watering and limit fertilizer run-off. Algae should be cleaned from under and on benches, walls, and floors. All doors and windows should remain closed or screened to prevent the invasion of shore flies. Compost should be aerated often and relocated away from doors and windows. Allow soil to dry before watering again. Remove standing water and eliminate any plumbing or irrigation system leaks.

Some Chemical Control Options:

Some chemical control options include using the active ingredients bifenthrin, permethrin to control adults and azadirachtin, cyromazine to control larvae.



Picture of adult shore fly. Photo on mrec.ifas.ufl.edu/lso/fungusgnats.htm.

Mention of commercial products is for educational purposes only and does not represent endorsement by Texas AgriLife Extension Service or The Texas A&M University System. Insecticide label registrations are subject to change, and changes may have occurred since this publication was printed. The pesticide user is always responsible for applying products in accordance with label directions. Always read and carefully follow the instructions on the container label.