

(revision date:7/14/2015)

Casemaking clothes moth

Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful pest management.

Biology

Clothes moths are widespread pests of fabrics, wool, furs, and other items of animal origin. The two species of clothes moths common to Washington are the webbing clothes moth and the casemaking clothes moth. The food habits of both species are similar; the casemaking clothes moth, however, will feed on some materials not of animal origin, such as tobacco and spices. Stored materials in dark areas are more susceptible to attack, since these insects avoid light. Clothes moths are small, 1/2 inch long, tan or yellowish insects. They have narrow wings fringed with long hairs. The casemaking clothes moth is somewhat smaller and darker than the webbing clothes moth, and it has three dark spots on the wings. The larvae of both species are light or cream-colored with a dark head and are up to about 1/3 inch long. The larvae of the webbing clothes moth may spin a silken tube or mat from which it feeds. The casemaking clothes moth carries a silken case around its body wherever it goes.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Vacuum and regularly clean areas where you might find clothes moths. For example, rugs, carpet, draperies, furniture cushions, inside closets, near and around heaters and vents.
- ~ Try not to accumulate and store large amounts of woolens or items made from animal products.
- ~ Properly clean and store pest-free items in air-tight containers.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides

Pesticide applications are not an effective way to solve the problem. Sanitation or location and elimination of the source of infestation are the only long-term controls. If a pesticide application is necessary contact a pest management professional.

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Images



~ Caption: Casemaking clothes moth larva
~ Photo by: Roger Akre