

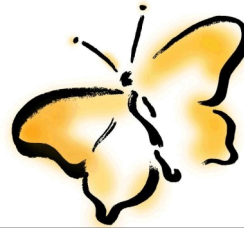
Red Spider Mites Campbell's

CULTIVATING IDEAS

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Description

Spider mites are so small that they can hardly be seen without a magnifying glass, though they can be seen as tiny moving specks with the naked eye when shaken onto a piece of white paper. They are often green, brown or yellow in color, but the females are usually reddish to carmine and the smaller males reddish-yellow. They are usually round to nearly round in outline and have eight (8) legs with the body thinly clothed with long, rigid hairs.

Life Cycle

Adult mites hibernate during the winter and begin laying their eggs in the hot, dry weather of early summer. Eggs are laid on the leaves of plants and hatch in three to five days. The young mites require about ten (10) days to mature and spin a very fine web over the stems and leaves. This gives plants an unsightly appearance and protects the eggs and young mites from rain and weather. Several generations are produced out of doors in the summer and the mites will live and breed the year around in greenhouses or on houseplants. They spread by crawling on the ground or being carried by wind or water.

Damage

Red spiders live on the underside of the leaves where they suck the sap from the host plant. This causes leaves to become dotted with feeding punctures and when in sufficient numbers causes yellowing and defoliation. They feed on almost 200 kinds of plants but evergreen injury in this area is one of the most troublesome. The build-up of the mite population can be quite rapid and in evergreens usually appears as a dying from the inside out.

Control

Red spider infestations are favored by warm dry weather. In spite of the protection of the webbing, rains tend to wash the mites off the plants. A thorough spraying with water through a nozzle will help control the mites. Wet weather also favors their natural enemies. However, when insect build-up is sufficient to cause damage, use Isotox, Malathion, or Dragon Pyrethrin Concentrate. These should be mixed and applied as directed on the label. Plants should be thoroughly covered with the spray mixture with special care to get the underside of the leaves.

We would advise in severe cases a second spraying in 7 to 10 days. To insure complete control, spray all evergreens on one (1) month intervals throughout the summer.