

Pro-Pest[®] R.T.U. Clothes Moth Traps

Webbing Clothes Moth

Tineola bisselliella

Fact Sheet



Clothes moths are a major pest in clothing and textiles as their larvae feed on the protein found in animal products such as wool, leather and silk. They eat away at the fabric and create holes. They reproduce rapidly and without monitoring or prevention, an infestation can become out of control before you detect their presence.

DISTRIBUTION & HABITAT:

Extensive distribution covering most of the globe, with the exception of the tropics. The clothes moth is relatively tolerant of low temperature, although it is considered to be an indoor insect. Associated with natural and animal products such as fiber, fur, fertilizers, feathers etc.

BIOLOGY:

Females actively search for suitable sites for oviposition such as natural fiber, cloth etc. Larvae will generally emerge at temperatures above 50°F. Very soon after hatch, larvae will begin construction of a tunnel from silk, fecal, and other materials found in the immediate area. These tunnels act as shelter during the day, offering the larvae good camouflage, from which they will emerge at night in order to feed. Larvae will pass through approximately five instars, although under adverse conditions there may be as many as 40 molts. Pupation occurs within the tunnel and shortly after eclosion, the adult form emerges. Adult females tend to move less than males, both sexes crawling rather than flying, with a characteristic “scuttling” in and around larval food material. Adults are unable to feed, due to atrophied mouthparts.

T. Bisselliella is able to breed at temperatures from 50°F to 92°F. Optimum relative humidity is 70%. Development of eggs may take from 6 to 38 days, larvae from 60 to 200 days and puparia 10 to 50 days. *T. Bisselliella* may be identified from its fringed wings (both hind and forewings), which are straw colored with no pattern. Antennae are long and thin. Adults reach between 1/8” and ¼” in length with a wingspan of ½” – ¾”.

SIGNIFICANCE AND PEST STATUS:

Often perceived as purely a household pest, the clothes moth has been responsible for losses of industrial revenue exceeding 12m in 1 year, although this has become less severe with a move away from natural fibers to synthetic fabrics. Other species have however filled this vacancy, most notably fur and carpet beetles. *T. bisselliella* has also been noted to infest dried vegetable material.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Sex pheromones attract the male moth. The females are not attracted to their own sex pheromone. The purpose of using a sex pheromone glue trap is to attract the male so they cannot mate with the female moth during her one-time estrus cycle, thus reducing or eliminating over a period of time the moth population.