

RED AND BLACK FLAT MITE ON ANTHURIUM

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Common Name: Red and black flat mite

Scientific Name: *Brevipalpus phoenicis*
(Geijskes)

Order: Acari

Family: Tenuipalpidae (false spider mites)

Damage

The red and black flat mite is the major species of false spider mite on anthurium. Damage consists of bronzing of the lower surface of leaves and flower spathe. Silken webs are not associated with false spider mites. For a photograph of the damage, see HITAHR Brief No. 073, "Identifying Anthurium Flower Injuries," Figure 8a.

Other Hosts

Allamanda, azalea, canna, chrysanthemum, coffee, citrus, daisy, guava, hibiscus, mango, orchid, papaya, and passion fruit may harbor the red and black flat mite.

Distribution

The red and black flat mite is widely distributed, occurring on all major continents.

Description and Life Cycle

Egg. The eggs are oval and bright red, and are found among the mite colonies, usually on both leaf surfaces. They hatch in about 9.4 days.

Larva. In the larval stage, the mite has six legs, is bright red, and is about 1/200 inch long. The duration of this stage is about 6.5 days.

Nymph. The nymph has eight legs and is larger than the larva. The duration of the nymph stage is about 14 days.

Adult. The adults are about 1/100 inch long, flat, and reddish with various patterns. Each female lays about 50 eggs during her life span of 34 days. Developmental time from egg to adult is about 29 days. For a photograph of the adult, see HITAHR Brief No. 073, "Identifying Anthurium Flower Injuries," Figure 8b.

Pest Management

False spider mites are relatively easily managed because of their long developmental time, low reproductive capacity, and lower resistance to miticides than the spider mites.

Monitoring. Look for bronzing of the petiole-spathe junction on flowers that are three-fourths mature.

Control. Make two to three applications of an effective registered miticide at two-week intervals. Make sure the spray covers the plants thoroughly, especially the undersides of the leaves and flowers.