

APHIDS

Description

Aphids are small, soft bodied, bulb shaped, slow moving insects. Adults can be from 2 to 3 mm in length, and nymphs up to 1.8 mm. They are usually green, but can vary from pink to red to black, depending on the species. Aphids suck plant sap on the undersurface of leaves, preferring new leaves and shoots. They secrete excess plant sap as a shiny, sticky substance known as honeydew. This becomes covered with a black sooty mould that gives the plant a dirty appearance and interferes with photosynthesis. Feeding causes discolouring, curling, wilting, and malformation of foliage. Aphid feeding may also transmit viruses to other hosts.

Life Cycle

Most aphids overwinter as eggs, emerge in spring as wingless females, give birth to living young, and repeat generations about every two weeks. The first generation, from overwintering females, has wings and flies to other plants. Subsequent generations develop wings only when conditions become crowded (winged forms are able to move to other hosts). In fall, males are born to fertilize females who lay overwintering eggs. Some aphids require more than one host to complete their life cycle, for example the spruce aphid.

Hosts

Most ornamental plants.



Aphid Damage on *Chrysanthemum*

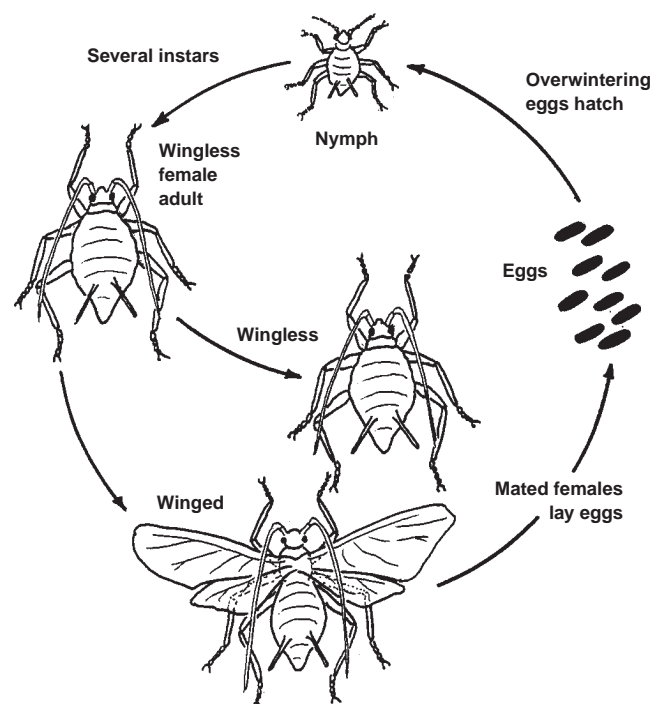


Green Peach Aphid



Cooley Aphid

Aphid Life Cycle (6–14 days)



Specific Aphids

Pine Bark Aphid (*Pineus strobi*)

White, cottony aphids found on the underside of limbs, trunk and at the base of needles. Sucking of sap reduces tree vitality and causes stunting and bushiness.

Spruce Aphid (*Elatobium abietinum*)

These dull green aphids, approximately 4.5 mm long at maturity, suck sap from older needles in late winter and in early spring. Needles in the lower, shaded areas of the trees are attacked first, turning brown and dropping prematurely.

Woolly Apple Aphid (*Eriosoma lanigera*)

These blue-black or rose coloured aphids are covered in long white, woolly hairs. They may attack deciduous and evergreen trees, but especially *Malus* and *Ulmus*. Woolly aphids feed on plant sap through roots, limbs, twigs, and trunk. Excess sap is secreted as honeydew on the plant foliage, becoming covered with unsightly black sooty mould. Galls, distortions, and unthriftness occur when excessive feeding takes place. Their woolly covering is hard to penetrate for chemical control. These pests overwinter as adults or eggs on host limbs and roots. Live young are born in spring and several generations are produced until fall. Winged forms may or may not be produced in mid summer, flying to other plants of the same or other species.



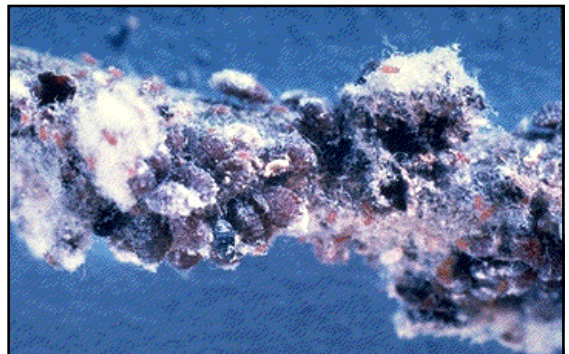
Pine Bark Aphid

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Spruce Aphid (*Elatobium abietinum*)

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Woolly Aphid

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