

## WHITEFLIES

**Greenhouse** (*Trialeurodes vaporariorum*), **Sweet Potato** (*Bemisia tabaci*), **Rhododendron** (*Dialeurodes chittendeni*), **Azalea** (*Pealius azaleae*)

### Description

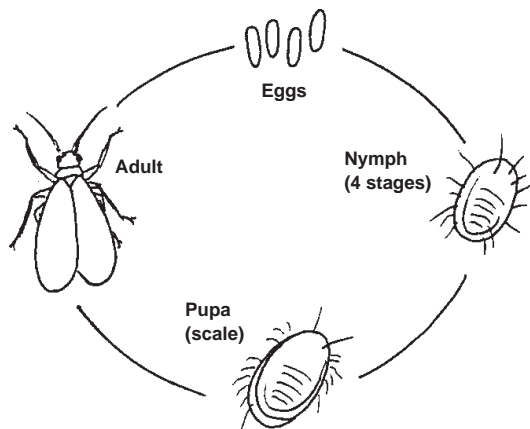
Whiteflies are 1 to 3 mm long and resemble small white moths. The two main whitefly pests in greenhouses are greenhouse whitefly, and sweet potato whitefly (SPW). Greenhouse whitefly have wings that lay flat on their back, while the SPW's wings lie almost parallel. SPW is much more resistant to chemical treatment, making it more of a problem.

### Life Cycle

In a greenhouse, whiteflies are very prolific, and have many overlapping life cycles. Females lay a number of small, whitish, oval eggs on the undersides of leaves. SPW's eggs are slightly darker than those of greenhouse whitefly. Upon hatching, the nymphs suck the sap from the leaf for about 4 weeks, after which they become adults and continue the life cycle.

Whiteflies are chiefly greenhouse pests, but some attack outdoor plants as well. Two examples are the rhododen-

### Greenhouse Whitefly Life Cycle (18–57 days)



Sweet Potato Whitefly - Pupa



Greenhouse Whitefly



Greenhouse Whitefly - Adult



Greenhouse Whitefly - Pupa



Sweet Potato Whitefly - Adult

A. B. Broadbent

R. Oetting

A. B. Broadbent

dron and azalea whiteflies. Rhododendron white fly adults are powdery white and lay eggs on undersides of leaves. Nymphs are greenish, transparent, flat and oval. They attach to the leaf and suck sap, causing yellow mottling and leaf curling. Honeydew is excreted, resulting in the growth of black sooty mould. Nymphs overwinter, becoming adults in spring. Azalea whitefly adults are powdery white and the nymphs are pale yellow to orange.

Infested plants lack vigour, wilt, turn yellow and may die. As whiteflies feed, they excrete sticky honeydew. A grey, sooty mould grows on the dew, gives the plant a dirty appearance and hinders photosynthesis.