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Shiny spider beetle

Gibbium aequinoctiale



GENERAL INFORMATION

The shiny spider beetle receives its name from its spider like appearance. Larvae can reach up to 3.5 to 4 mm in length, and adults grow to 1.5 to 3.5 mm in length. Larvae possess light brown heads, cream bodies, and are “C” shaped. Adults are dark reddish-brown or black with long legs, a fused elytra, and a shiny, smooth, globular abdomen. The structure and impermeable cuticle allows this insect to retain water and survive a desiccated environment up to three months. This insect is mostly found in North America.

SIGNS OF INFESTATION

Signs of infestation include infested food, beetle frass, silk from the insect’s cocoons, and wood damage from tunneling larvae. The presence of the shiny spider beetle is often not apparent as they prefer dark and damp locations and scavenge at night. They have been found within walls, bird nests, rodent nests, and floor cracks usually in households, stores, warehouses, and cosmopolitan areas.

FOOD SOURCES

The shiny spider beetle is a scavenger and can survive on a number of dead organic sources. The insect can feed on but are not limited to the following: rodent nests, dead insects, bones, dried fruits, silk, textile fabrics, bat droppings, leather, and feathers.

LIFE CYCLE

Eggs are laid in or on the material surrounding the food source. Larvae spin shelters, and pupate



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DIAGNOSTIC MORPHOLOGY

Adults:

- Adults are 1.5-3.5mm in length
- They have a shiny abdomen
- They are dark reddish-brown or black



Immature Stage:

- They are 3.5-4mm in length
- They are “C” shaped
- They have a light brown head, cream body



within a silky cocoon. Larvae are scarabaeiform (grub-like in appearance). In temperate climates, two generations can be produced per year. Adult shiny spider beetles are most active at night and, due to their cold tolerance, tend to have a long lifespan.

CONTROL AND TREATMENT

Standard prevention measures of IPM should be followed, including exclusion and elimination of food sources. Shiny spider beetles are known to tolerate lower temperatures than many other beetles, surviving below 10° Celsius. Standard low temperature conditions, therefore, may not be effective in controlling the populations. In the event of infestation, the source of infestation (likely food) should be removed if possible. Spider beetles prefer dark areas, making them hard to locate. Sticky traps may be effective in detection and monitoring.

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Fact Sheet: Shiny spider beetle

References

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