

We've *all* been there. Experiencing some sort of pest outbreak is a rite of passage for every indoor gardener, whether you've been working with plants for 10 years or 10 minutes. But don't worry, with consistent care, your houseplant will be back to thriving in no time.

PREVENTION IS THE BEST TREATMENT

Houseplants are little pockets of the outdoors that need a few basic needs met to thrive. If not, your plant can get stressed, and will be less able to defend itself against pests. Create a care schedule that works best for *you* and keep your plants healthy by repotting, trimming, and dividing as needed. Then, the number of battles you'll have to fight and products you'll have to purchase will be greatly reduced.

WE'VE GOT A SITUATION...

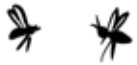
The best thing to do if you think you have an indoor pest situation is to quarantine the infected plant until you are certain there are no more signs of infestation. Once you've narrowed down the insect that has made your plant its own private villa, you can begin the treatment process. Keep in mind, some of the pests listed here have multiple life stages, and will need to be treated multiple times to reduce, and eventually eliminate the infestation. It's *essential* to carefully follow the instructions for each solution for this to work!

An important note: Our team keeps a watchful eye on every single plant that comes into our greenhouse, but it's always a good idea to inspect new plants before bringing them home.



FUNGUS GNATS

Adult gnats are a nuisance, but totally harmless. A large enough population of larva, on the other hand, can damage roots and spread disease. Fungus gnats are attracted to waterlogged soils, the perfect breeding ground for their eggs.



Avoid overwatering, and don't leave standing water in saucers. Aerating the top 1-2 inches of soil can effectively damage egg and larvae development.

The fungus gnat life cycle can take up to 4 weeks, so treating affected plants quickly and consistently is key. The longer you wait, the more generations you'll have living in your soil! Refer to package directions for each solution.

Treatments for Larvae:

- ¼" layer of sand/small pebbles on soil
- Diatomaceous Earth
- Nematodes
- 1-4 ratio hydrogen peroxide - water drench
- Mosquito Bits (*Bacillus thuringiensis* – BT)
- Systemic granules

Treatments for Adults:

- Yellow sticky Gnat Traps
- Neem Oil
- Pyrethrin Insecticide sprays
- Carnivorous plants (ask us how!)

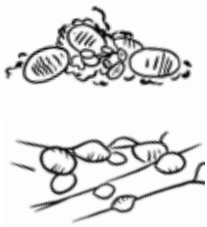


SPIDER MITES

Although the actual mites are almost impossible for us to see, they can certainly do a lot of damage! Look for webbing at leaf junctions and on the underside of leaves. Another tell-tale sign is 'stippling' or fading color on the leaves, like the color is being sucked right out... which it is! Unlike fungus gnats, they thrive in dry environments. Increasing humidity and sticking to a regular watering schedule can make conditions less desirable for these pests.

Spider mites can be controlled, but heavy infestations will take time and attentiveness to fully eradicate. Forcefully spray down your plant with water to knock as many mites off as you can. Once the foliage has dried completely, use beneficial insects or an insecticide/miticide.

- Ladybugs or Lacewings
- Neem Oil or other Miticidal sprays



MEALY BUGS & SCALE

Although they look quite different, they are related, and can be treated the same way. Mealy bugs can be identified by the sticky white cotton coating they emit, sometimes mistaken for mold. Scale insects have a hard wax coating that protects their soft body and eggs. They look like a small scab in a variety of colors, and can be found on the underside of leaves and on stems.

If you have mealy bugs or scale, *everything* will be sticky! Even the floor and walls close to an infected plant will be sticky to the touch. Heavier infestations can be a little harder to control, and even after treatments, scale bugs will leave their hard shell behind.

- Dab a Q-tip with isopropyl alcohol directly onto the insect
- Systemic granules
- Insecticidal soap
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APHIDS

These soft-bodied pests are most commonly light green, but can also be brown, white or black. They are attracted to new growth and flowers, and will hide on the underside of leaves where they attach themselves, and suck out plant sap, distorting new growth as it matures. Large infestations can cause leaf drop; the sticky 'honeydew' they secrete can cause sooty mold.

Aphids multiply rapidly, so treat as soon as possible! Forcefully spray down your plant with water to knock as many aphids off as you can. Use caution for plants with tender foliage. After the foliage has dried completely, use the insecticide or remedy of your choice.

- Neem Oil
- Insecticidal soap
- Q-tip with isopropyl alcohol dabbed right on contact to insect
- 1 tsp. liquid dish soap diluted into 1 gallon water
- Sticky aphid traps
- Ladybugs or Lacewings