



Spider Mites

There are many species of spider mites. Many are specific to a particular plant or family of plants, others can feed on a wide range of plant hosts.

Most spider mites feed on the under side of leaves, sucking the juices out of individual cells, leaving an appearance of tiny dots, call stippling. (See image below ↘) But there are some mites like the southern red spider mite that will feed on the surface of the leaf.

The most common spider mite may be the two spotted spider mite (see top image ↗). They feed on a very wide range of plants including many flowers and vegetables.

Most spider mites like hot weather and their life cycles will increase from weeks to days in hot, dry conditions. Most mites winter over as adults, emerging and laying eggs. The larvae hatches out and feeds, it only has 6 legs. Then they go through 2 nymph stages before becoming an adult, with 8 legs.

Spruce Mites

Spruce mites are a cool season mite, attacking: spruce, arborvitae and junipers, as hot weather approaches their activity decreases.

Control

Before I talk about controls, many products list spider mites on their label, and some do not. Many of these are broad spectrum, killing more of the natural predators of the mites, than mites themselves. Carbaryl, Malathion & Pyrethroids all fall into these categories. Some actually increase the reproduction of the spider mites. Also remember, most systemic insecticides DO NOT control spidermites.

The best controls for spider mites are oils. Oils are suffocants, if an insect can't breath, it will die. There is no way an insect can build a resistance to suffocation. Since oil is a suffocant, it is a contact killer, complete coverage is required to achieve desired results.

The absolute Best product for spider mites is the *NG Horticultural Oil*. This is not a dormant oil, this is a highly refined oil made from plants, so is very safe and is OMRI Listed. In hot weather, when temperatures are over 93° make your application; very early in the morning, right before dark in the evening or on an overcast day.

Another OMRI Listed, choice is *FL Triple Action*, this contains Neem Oil and is also a fungicide. Be careful of temperatures over 90 degrees.

During dormancy, *HY Dormant Spray* is more effective on over wintering adults and eggs.



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