

Beneficial Species Profile



Photo credit: Joseph Berger, Bugwood.org

Common Name: Hide beetle; Carpet beetle

Scientific Name: *Dermestes spp.*

Order and Family: Coleoptera, Dermestidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg		
Larva/Nymph	5-15 mm	Tan or brown and covered in setae of various lengths.
Adult	2-12 mm	Rounded or oval; covered with colorful scales or hair.
Pupa (if applicable)		

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Chewing mouthparts

Host/s: Dermestids feed primarily on carcasses, skin, feathers, dead and dry organic matter with a high protein content.

Description of Benefits (predator, parasitoid, pollinator, etc.): Usually show up during the late stages of decomposition of an animal carcass. They can be considered a forensically important insect.

Common dermestids include hide or carpet beetles, which feed on these substances. Dermestid species have been found feeding on carpets, stored food items, wool, silk, museum specimens, and some structural items such as wood. However, taxidermists will rear them to clean bones.

References:

Byrd, J. H., & Castener, J. L. (2001). *Forensic Entomology: the utility of arthropods in legal investigations*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Publishing.

Shaver, B., & Kaufman, P. E. (2009). Hide beetle. *Featured creature*. University of Florida.