

## Agricultural Pest Profile



**Photo credit:** Adult: Alton N. Sparks, Jr., University of Georgia, Bugwood.org  
**Onion damage:** Scot Nelson Wikicommons

**Common Name:** Onion thrips

**Scientific Name:** *Thrips tabaci*

**Order and Family:** Thysanoptera: Thripidae

**Size and Appearance:**

	Length (mm)	Appearance
<b>Egg</b>	Microscopic	White or yellow. Inserted into plant tissue
<b>Larva/Nymph</b>	.5-1.2 mm	White to pale yellow, wingless
<b>Adult</b>	1-2 mm	Pale yellow to dark brown. Wings are narrow and fringed, fold flat on back of thrips
<b>Pupa</b>	1-2 mm	Intermediate between nymph and adult. Yellow to brown, in soil or on plant (A & S 1983)

**Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.):** **Nymph:** Cutting/sucking. **Adult:** Cutting/sucking

**Host/s:** *T. tabaci* feeds on a wide variety of hosts including beans, cabbage, celery, cotton, cucumbers, pineapple, and tomatoes.

**Description of Agricultural Importance (nymphs and adults):** World-wide pest. Major economic pest of onions and garlic in tropical regions. *T. tabaci* can produce a new generation in less than 2 weeks under optimal conditions and can produce sexually or parthenogenically (Soni & Ellis 1990).

Thrips are poor fliers so planting new fields upwind of existing fields reduces infestation. (Hoffman 1996)

**References:**

Andaloro, J. T. and A. M. Shelton. (1983). *Insects of Onions and Cabbage*. Onion Thrips, N.Y. State Agric. Exp. Stn. Geneva Publ. 750.75, 2.

Hoffmann M. P., C. H. Petzoldt and A. C. Frodsham. (1996). Integrated Pest Management for Onions. New York State IPM Program Publication No. 119.

Soni S. k. and P. R. Ellis. 1990. Insect Pest. In: Rabinowitch H. D. and J. L. Brewster (editors) *Onion and Allied Crops. Volume II. Agronomy, Biotic interactions, pathology, and Crop protection*. CRC Florida.

**Ron Hirzel**  
***Thrips tabaci***