

Pest Profile



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Common Name: Pubic louse, Crab louse

Scientific Name: *Pthirus pubis*

Order and Family: Phthiraptera: (Anoplura) Pthiridae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	0.7- 1 mm	Tan-brown with cap when occupied, empty shell is white. Glued to coarse hair
Larva/Nymph	0.7 mm -1.5 mm	Similar to adult
Adult	1.3 mm – 2 mm. Grayish to tan, reddish when blood filled.	Flattened shield shaped body, 4 rear legs thick, all legs have large claws (Service 2012)
Pupa (if applicable)		

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Piercing-sucking

Host/s: Humans

Description of Medical Importance (Larvae and adults): Both adults and nymphs need 4-5 blood meals per day. Nuisance ectoparasite infests pubic area, clings to pubic hair. On rare occasions infests eyelashes, arm pits or beards (Service 2012) Nuttall, 1918). Not a disease vector.

References:

Service, M. 2012. *Medical Entomology for Students (5th ed.)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [ISBN 978-1-107-66818-8](#).

Nuttall, G. H. F., 1918. "The biology of *Phthirus pubis*". *Parasitology*. **10**: 383–405. [doi:10.1017/s003118200003954](#)

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