

Pest Profile



Photo credit: by Jim Kalish, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Entomology

Common Name: Cat Flea

Scientific Name: *Ctenocephalides felis*

Order and Family: Siphonaptera: Pulicidae

Size and Appearance: Adult cat fleas are 2.5 mm in length with flattened, wingless, brown bodies. When the flea has taken a blood meal, abdomen will be bright red. They have compound eyes and spines visible on all 6 legs. Larvae are white, slender, and have no eyes or legs.

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	< 0.05 mm	Eggs are oval and white in color. Females lay a few eggs after every blood meal which can add up to 400-500 in lifetime.
Larva/Nymph	< 1 mm-2.5 mm depending on instar	White, slender, with no eyes or legs. 3 larval instars.
Adult	2.5 mm	Flattened, wingless, brown bodies. Compound eyes and spines on tibia.
Pupa (if applicable)	2.0 mm	White, darkens before emerging occurs. Made of silk and debris.

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

Host /stored food products: *Ctenocephalides felis* (Bouche) feed on the blood of mammalian hosts, primarily cats and dogs. Occasionally found on rats, opossums, and foxes.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Fleas can vector illnesses such as plague. They are intermediate hosts for both dog and rodent tapeworms. Since both of these can be transmitted to humans, proper control is recommended. Fleas are commonly found where animals are likely to be such as sleeping areas, outdoor pens, doghouses, etc. and extra care should be taken in proper animal hygiene to avoid infestation.

References:

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