

Pest Profile



Photo credit By Jim Kalisch, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Common Name: House Fly

Scientific Name: *Musca domestica* Linnaeus

Order and Family: Diptera: Muscidae

Size and Appearance: Adult members of the house fly are about 6-7 mm in length with an overall gray body color with black stripes on the thorax. The flies feature bright red eyes, sponging mouthparts, and a distinct bend in the 4th longitudinal wing vein. Maggots are white except for hooks on head region, legless, and cylindrical in shape.

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	1.2 mm in length	White, laid singly in small piles in manure.
Larva/Nymph	7-12 mm in length depending on instar	White, cylindrical, hooks on head, legless. 3 instars.
Adult	6-7 mm long	Females are larger than males. Gray with black stripes on thorax, red eyes, upward bend in 4th longitudinal wing vein.
Pupa (if applicable)	8 mm long	Pupal cased formed from the last larval skin and is yellowish-brown in color.

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

Host /s: *M. domestica* feed on a manure, human food, garbage, and decaying matter. They are “general” feeders and have no strong preference.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): House flies harbor several disease pathogens including dysentery, cholera, salmonella, anthrax, polio, and parasitic worms. They distribute the pathogens onto food sources via vomit, frass, and saliva. In addition to harboring disease, they also are classified as nuisance pests as they seek indoor shelter on cool days. Due to a quick lifecycle, their numbers can grow to infestation level quickly.

References:

Smith, E.H. and Whitman, R.C. (2007). Flies (non-biting)- House Flies. In *NPMA Field Guide of Structural Pests*. (6.6.1). National Pest Management Association International.

Sanchez-Arroyo, H., Capinera, J.L. (2008). House Fly. University of Florida, Department of Entomology. Retrieved July 26th, 2016 from http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/urban/flies/house_fly.HTM