

Pest Profile



Photo credit: By Raphael Baumann (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons

Common Name: Millipedes

Scientific Name: *Various sp.*

Order and Family: Diplopoda: various

Size and Appearance: Millipedes vary in size and coloration but most of those that invade homes tend to be between 2-115 mm long with cylindrical bodies. Generally, they feature darker coloration with black and brown being the most commonly seen. Though often thought of as having thousands of legs, they usually have between 30-90. Millipedes have two pairs of legs per each body segment with the first 3 to 4 segments and last 3 not having any. They have 1 pair of antennae and a set of simple eyes.

| | Length (mm) | Appearance |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Egg | < 0.1 mm | Females lay 20-300 eggs in soil crevices during warm summer months. Hatch after 2-3 weeks. |
| Larva/Nymph | 1-115 mm depending on species | Young millipedes resemble adults and go through 7-10 molts. |
| Adult | 2-115 mm depending on species | Dark in color, 2 pairs of legs per segment, cylindrical body, no legs on first 3 and last 3 segments, 1 pair of antennae, simple eyes. Sexual maturity reached after 2 years, can live several years. |
| Pupa (if applicable) | | |

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

Host/s: Millipedes seek out humid environments as they require a high level of moisture to survive. They are usually found around decaying vegetation, trash, compost piles, grass clippings, leaf litter, mulch, and flower pots.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Millipedes can exhibit huge numbers as a result of warm temperatures, heavy rain, rising water tables, and a need to mate. All these factors can drive them from their usual shelters to indoor environments. They do not cause damage indoors and will die within a few days if moisture requirements are not met. They may eat living plant material as a moisture source during dry periods.

References:

Smith, E.H. and Whitman, R.C. (2007). Occasional Invaders- Milipedes. In *NPMA Field Guide of Structural Pests*. (7.17.2). National Pest Management Association International.

Benson, E.P. (2005). Millipedes. Clemson University Entomology, Soils, and Plant Sciences. Retrieved on June 30th, 2016 from http://www.clemson.edu/cafls/departments/esps/factsheets/household_structural/millipedes_hs18.html