

Pest Profile



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Common Name: Springtail

Scientific Name: *Various*

Order and Family: Collembola: Various

Size and Appearance: Springtails are known for having a furcula (jumping organ) which allows them to “spring” a considerable distance. There are roughly 675 species of springtails in the United States and the size variance is about 1-3 mm for adults with elongate, soft bodies. Most are wingless and are usually whitish to brownish-gray in coloration. They also have small eyes, short antennae with 4-6 segments, with a tube-like structure, called a colophore, on the first abdominal segment. Immatures are similar to adults in appearance.

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	< 0.1 mm	Females lay small, transparent eggs singularly or in small clutches in moist areas.
Larva/Nymph	1-5 mm	Nymphs resemble adults and must go through 5-10 molts to reach sexual maturity.
Adult	1-3 mm	Adults will vary in color by species but are often white to brown or gray. They feature small eyes, 4-6 segmented antennae, and a structure called a colophore on the first abdominal segment.
Pupa (if applicable)		

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

Host/s: *Collembola* prefer moist environments as they have an open respiratory system and lose water through their cuticle. They feed on decaying vegetation, bacteria, pollen, and carrion of other arthropods.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Springtails are primarily a nuisance pest that end up indoors when seeking areas of high moisture. They are often found inside in bathrooms, kitchens, houseplants, and outdoor pools. Since they can occur in large numbers and jump, they are often mistaken for fleas. Generally, they do not cause any physical damage but have been known to cause dermatitis in sensitive individuals.

References:

Smith, E.H. and Whitman, R.C. (2007). Occasional Invaders- Springtails. In *NPMA Field Guide of Structural Pests*. (7.25.1). National Pest Management Association International.

Perry, E. (July 2007). Springtails. Pest Notes. University of California Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Publication 74136. Retrieved on July 2nd, 2016 from <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PDF/PESTNOTES/pnspringtails.pdf>