

Pest Profile



Photo credit By Jim Kalisch, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Common Name: Varied Carpet Beetle

Scientific Name: *Anthrenus verbasci* (Linnaeus)

Order and Family: Coleoptera: Dermestidae

Size and Appearance: Adult varied carpet beetles are about 1.8-3.2 mm long and have an extremely distinctive color pattern of black with yellow and white scales. Often, bands of white scales are bordered by yellow scales across the elytra. The underside coloration is usually gray. They feature 3-segmented antenna, an oval body shape, and a head restricted by view dorsally. Larvae are 4-5 mm in length, wide, and range in color from brown to black. Their bodies are also covered with brown hairs as long as their body.

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	0.1 mm in length	Female lays round, white eggs on larval food material. They have been known to lay their eggs elsewhere as well.
Larva/Nymph	4-5 mm in length depending on instar	Wide bodies, brown, long hairs covering body. 7-8 molts
Adult	1.8-3.2 mm long	Distinct coloration with black, white, and yellow scales. Dorsally restricted view of head, gray underside, round shape.
Pupa (if applicable)	2-4.0 mm long	Pupates in last larval skin which is brown in coloration. Can be located outside of larval food material.

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

Host food product/s: *Anthrenus verbasci* feeds on a variety of textiles including wool, carpets, hides, and furs. Additionally, they will consume animal and plant materials ranging from museum specimens to fish meal.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Varied carpet beetles usually produce surface damage to textiles in the form of holes. Larvae causes irregular-shaped holes throughout fabrics. They consume the tips of furs leaving behind uneven patches. Molts and frass are often left behind in museum collection damage. Heavy infestations have been known to cause human dermatitis in sensitive individuals.

References:

Smith, E.H. and Whitman, R.C. (2007). Fabric and Paper Pests- Varied Carpet Beetle. In *NPMA Field Guide of Structural Pests*. (5.6.1). National Pest Management Association International.

Howard, R. (May 2010). Carpet Beetles. University of Michigan Extension. Retrieved July 24th, 2016 from http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/carpet_beetles