

Montana small grain insects

Beneficial Insects

Many kinds of beneficial insects are found in Montana crops. They help prevent outbreaks of pest insects.

Capsule Information Series

Number 36, October 1991

Lady Beetles

Larva

Adults



Ladybeetle eggs



Ladybugs feed on aphids and other soft bodied insects. Adults lay clusters of orange eggs on plants. Eggs hatch into larvae which also are predaceous. Fully grown larvae change into pupae which produce adults.

Syrphid fly

Syrphid fly maggots attack aphids and other small insects. They are common when wheat heads are filling. Adults are bee-like flies.



Larva with aphid

Damsel bug

Damsel bug nymphs and adults attack aphids, small caterpillars, and other insects. They are common in wheat and alfalfa.



Adult feeding on aphid

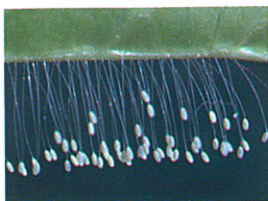
Aphid parasites

Aphid parasites are tiny wasps. Dead aphids are brown and sometimes called "mummies" because they are brown and paper-like. Parasites reproduce rapidly and can quickly bring aphid outbreaks under control.



Aphid mummies

Green lacewings



Eggs

Green lacewing adults lay eggs on slender stalks which protect them from other larvae. Larvae feed on aphids and other insects.



Adult



Larva with aphid

Some Concepts:

- Beneficial insects may move between crops.
- Alfalfa is an excellent source of beneficials.
- Use caution when purchasing beneficial insects from other states.
- Insecticide treatments may kill beneficial insects and result in further outbreaks of insect pests.
- Many kinds of beneficial insects occur naturally, and help suppress pest insects.