

## MINT APHID Homoptera: Aphididae *Ovatus crataegarius*

### DESCRIPTION

Wingless **adults and nymphs** are yellow-green to apple green, mottled with darker green markings. They range in size from 1.5 to 2 mm long and occur in colonies on mint leaves. Winged forms have dark brown heads and thorax areas with yellow-green abdomens. Winged forms are most common in the spring and fall.

### ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE

Adults and nymphs suck plant juices from mint stems and leaves. Damage occurs when the population is very high and the leaves are coated with large amounts of honeydew that may interfere with harvest.

### DISTRIBUTION AND LIFE HISTORY

Mint aphids are found in all mint producing areas of the northwest, but are most serious east of the Cascade Mountains. Mint aphids overwinter as adults and nymphs in the soil around the bases of mint plants, on mint roots, beneath plant debris, and in cracks and crevices in the soil. Females give birth to mobile nymphs in the spring. Nymphs move upward on the plants and begin feeding on leaves and stems. Rates of development and population densities increase with increasing temperature. During the summer and early fall, a generation may be completed in seven to 10 days and as many as 12 to 15 generations may be produced each year.

### MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

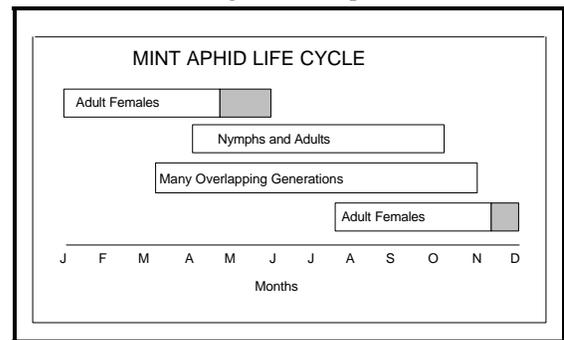
The mint aphid population can be estimated by using a sweep net during the same time as sampling for other mint insects. In most years and in most production areas, naturally occurring predators such as lady beetles, lacewings, and syrphid larvae suppress the population. Parasites, which aid in the suppression of mint aphid, also may be present in some fields. Since populations are usually controlled naturally, insecticides are seldom needed to control this pest.



Mint Aphid Colony



Winged Mint Aphid



[\[Return to Insect Management\]](#) [\[Home\]](#)