A Bug's Life

Fun facts
• Over 675 species in US and Canada
• May occur in enormous numbers
• Require high moisture to survive
• Not harmful to health or home, but considered a nuisance pest
• Many species occur outdoors in soil, fungi, decaying organic matter, wood mulch, leaf litter, swimming pools
• Enter through window screens, open doors, vent pipes, potted plants

Identification
Habitat: Attracted to areas of damp areas with high humidity where mildew odors are detectable; during times of hot, humid weather. Springtails: 1/32" to 1/8" long, wingless, soft-bodied, elongate body with long antennae, forked (springlike/furcula) appendage under abdomen allows them to jump.

Management
• Vacuum and wipe down areas of high moisture like bathrooms, kitchens, crawlspace, basements, laundry rooms and around windowsills.
• Dry out site with dehumidifier/fans.
• Do not overwater potted plants.
• For excessive infestations where moisture cannot be managed, contact professional to treat outside surfaces (usually west/sunny side of building).

Photos: J. Green

Springtails (magnified)

Springtails on a sticky trap