

A Bug's Life

Two-spotted spider mite

Tetranychus urticae

Fun facts

- Mites are not insects, but arachnids
- Infestations occur during hot, dry summer weather
- Overwinter as adults in debris

Host plants

- Deciduous trees, evergreens, ornamental plants (burning bush), garden plants (marigolds), vegetables (tomatoes), berries, etc.

Identification

Damage: Tiny white or yellow spots on leaves, distorted leaves and flowers, browning, leaf drop, stunted growth, silk strands, fine webbing and may lead to plant death

Mite: Very tiny, 1/50" long, 4 pairs of legs, yellow with 2 dark spots on each side of the body

Management

- Examine plants for mites by shaking plant over white paper every 3 to 5 days during drought conditions
- Keep plants watered to avoid stress
- High pressure water spray of hose for knockdown and break up webbing
- Biorational products include insecticidal soap and horticultural oil to conserve natural enemies



Photos: J. Green