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Common Insects & Mites : Earwigs

Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.

Biology

Earwigs are reddish-brown insects about 3/4" or less in length. Both males and females have pincers at the rear end. Earwigs are largely beneficial, feeding on many pests such as aphids (including apple aphids), mites, and nematodes, as well as on algae, fungi, and decaying plant material. However, earwigs can also damage plants. They sometimes feed on flowers, shoot tips, leaves, or fruit. Damaged shoot tips may fail to develop properly, sometimes stunting growth. Damaged leaves exhibit small to large holes. Fruit damage consists of shallow, irregular areas chewed into the surface.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Rolled newspapers or flat boards placed beneath trees can serve both as monitoring devices and as traps for earwigs, which prefer narrow, enclosed hiding places.
- ~ Remove tree wraps, which may provide shelter for earwigs.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides

None recommended.

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Images



*~ Caption: Earwigs and damage to cucumber
~ Photo by: T. Hudson*



*~ Caption: An adult European earwig
~ Photo by: M. Bush*