

Pacific Pests, Pathogens and Weeds - Online edition

Western flower thrips (183)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. On more than 250 plants in 65 families; these include: soft fruit (plums, peaches, strawberries, grapes); flowers (*Gladiolus*, *Impatiens*, *Gerbera*, *Chrysanthemum*, poinsettia); vegetables (cucumber, tomato, capsicum, cabbages, beans), and wild flowers. An important pest.
- Eggs laid in flowers or leaves; nymphs and adults cause distortions, spots and silvering, and spread viruses (e.g., *Tomato spotted wilt virus*).
- Spread by short flights, and by the plant trade.
- Cultural control: check seedlings in nurseries – if necessary, use thrips-grade screen; 10 m grass strips around nurseries; avoid planting new crops near old; weed; use yellow or blue sticky traps to monitor thrips; rogue plants with virus; collect and burn trash after harvest; crop rotation.
- Chemical control: soap, white or horticultural oils, neem or spinosad; note, thrips has resistance to many synthetic pesticides.

Common Name

Western flower thrips

Scientific Name

Frankliniella occidentalis



Photo 1. Spotting on tomato leaves caused by western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*.



Photo 2. Spotting on poinsettia leaves caused by western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*.



Photo 4. Nymph of western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*.



Photo 5. Adult of western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*. Note the feathery wings.



Photo 3. Mottling on tomato fruits caused by *Tomato spotted wilt virus* transmitted by the western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*.

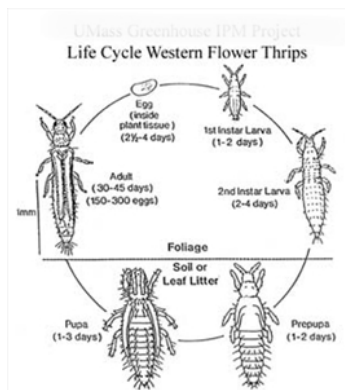


Diagram. Life cycle of western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*.

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Information from CABI (2020) *Frankliniella occidentalis* (western flower thrips). Invasive Species Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/24426>); and Western flower thrips. Plant Health Australia. (<https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/pests/western-flower-thrips/>); and from DPIRD (2016) Chemical control of western flower thrips. Agriculture and Food. Government of western Australia. (<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/fruit/chemical-control-western-flower-thrips>). Photo 1 T Smith, University of Massachusetts. Bugwood.org. Photo 2 L Pundt, University of Connecticut. Photo 3 William M Brown Jr., Bugwood.org. Photo 4 Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org. Photo 5 Jack T Reed, Mississippi State University, Bugwood.org. Diagram Life cycle western flower thrips. University of Massachusetts.

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