

COMMON PESTS

MEALYBUGS

Mealybugs are white, cotton-like insects with small, oval-shaped bodies. They are often found in the crevices between leaves and stems. Some signs of mealybug infestation include white stains on leaves, sooty mold, and reduced plant vigor.



Image: Melina Castro

SCALE

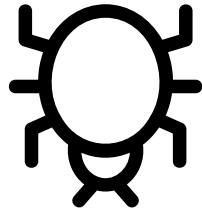
Scale can be hard to detect. The females often look like brown growths on a plant's surface. Their waxy coating makes them resistant to many pesticides. Signs of scale infestation include sooty mold, sticky "honeydew," ants, and discoloration.



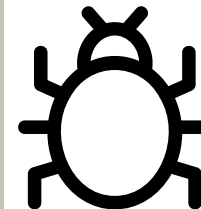
Image: Melina Castro

REMOVAL

Fun Fact: Smithsonian Gardens uses a number of beneficial insects to eat these pests, in order to reduce the need for pesticides!



- **Peppermint Soap:** Spray the plant with a mint soap mixture, then take a cotton ball or toothbrush and wipe away any insects.
- OR
- **Rubbing Alcohol (70% isopropyl):** Apply a mixture of 10% rubbing alcohol and water directly to the pest with a cotton ball, then remove.



Tip: Monitor plants for pests and repeat removal efforts weekly until they are completely gone.

THRIPS

Thrips can be very difficult to see with the naked eye. They have small, narrow bodies and are quite mobile. Some signs that you might have a thrip infestation are spotting or streaking in the leaves, damaged flowers, or stunted growth.



Image: Biodiversity Heritage Library

APHIDS

Aphids are green/black insects that form colonies on new growth, leaf undersides, and flowers. Signs of aphid damage can look similar to damage done by thrips. Aphids also produce a sticky substance called "honeydew," which may be present.



Image: Kim Christensen

