

Drain Fly

Common Name: Drain fly or Moth Fly

Common Family Name: Moth flies

Other Names: Drain flies, sand flies

Origin: A number of native species of flies in this family occur throughout North America.



Biology: The genus *Phlebotomus* contains some species which are blood feeders, and they are vectors of several important diseases including Leishmaniasis. The larvae of this family of flies feed on organic material they find in damp situations, including on soils or leaf litter. In structures this may be a sludge buildup in floor or sink drains, giving the flies' one of their common names. They may also occur in large numbers in septic systems, sewage treatment plants, or dirty garbage containers. The eggs are laid in masses of from 30 to 100 eggs, on the surface of the material in which the larvae will feed. The larvae feed within the sludge, breathing through siphon tubes on their body that project out of the material. The time from egg to adult fly may be from 8 to 24 days, depending on the temperature. Adult flies are attracted to lights.

Identification: The name "moth fly" is given due to their similarity to a small, gray moth. The adult flies are very small, and covered with short, gray hairs on their wings and entire body. The wings are oval and held flat over the abdomen, at a slight outward, or "delta", angle.

Characteristics Important in Control: Elimination of larval breeding sources is critical, by removing sludge buildup in floor or sink drains and controlling moisture accumulation in low spots on floors or exterior areas. Regular washing of dumpsters will remove spilled materials.