

Fruit Fly

Common Name: Vinegar fly

Common Family Name: Pomace or Fruit flies

Other Names: Pomace fly, fruit fly



Origin: Many species of these flies occur throughout the world. The species *Drosophila melanogaster* is one of the most common in structures, and is used extensively in laboratory studies of genetic characteristics.

Biology: The vinegar flies can breed in any fermenting organic material, particularly fruit and vegetable juices or damaged fruits and vegetables. They may be drawn to spills of alcohol or soda syrups, to vegetable and fruit displays in markets, and reach abundance in the late summer and fall in gardens, when fruits and vegetables tend to go unharvested and lay on the ground. Eggs are laid on the food source for the larvae, and hatch within about 1 day. The larval period is less than 1 week and adults emerge from the pupa in only a day or two, with total development time averaging about 8 days. Females can lay about 500 eggs. Adult flies are attracted to lights.

Identification: The common species of *Drosophila* is a tiny fly, usually only 3 mm long. It has bright red eyes, a tan/orange body color, and distinct rings or stripes around the segments of the abdomen. At rest the wings are held crossed and flat over the abdomen.

Characteristics Important in Control: Elimination of the source of the larvae is critical, and emergence of new adult flies will continue until this source is eliminated. Any buildup of organic matter in cracks or floor drains can support larvae, along with unwashed garbage containers, spilled juices, or over-ripe fruits and vegetables. Traps exist specifically for the control of vinegar flies. Applications of residual insecticides to surfaces the adults gather on will be effective in reducing their numbers.