

Drainflies (Moth Flies)

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Drainflies (Fig. 1) are tiny flies in the family Psychodidae sometimes found in annoying numbers near sinks in the home. The larval stage feeds on various microorganisms associated with organic matter in the drain trap. Drainflies may also be found in other moist, organic places, such as houseplant saucers, storm drains, and decaying plant matter. Nearby ponds, sewage treatment plants, etc., also may be sources of infestations.

Larvae are small, pale, and are tolerant of heat, cold, and low oxygen. Adults are very small, fuzzy flies that somewhat resemble tiny moths. They may congregate near larval feeding places. The adults are usually 3-4 mm long, and are attracted to lights.

Management

The organic matter and associated larval food must be eliminated to achieve management of drainflies. Thoroughly clean out drain traps with a brush and drain cleaner. Remove and/or clean up stagnant water, decaying matter, and other larval food sources. If ponds, sewage treatment plants, etc., are the source of the infestation, contact personnel at those places.



Fig. 1. An adult drainfly. By K. Grey