



## Predatory Mites (predators)

### What to look for

Mites are not insects; they are more closely related to spiders. Adult mites have four pairs of legs, like spiders, and two body parts, rather than the insect's three. Mites can approach prey in areas not reachable by chemical sprays. Look for them in areas of spider mite and thrips infestation.



*Predatory mite feeding on western flower thrips larva.*

### Appearance

Adults are very small, about 1/32 inch, teardrop shaped, orange-red, tan, or brown and are fast moving.

The nymphs look like the adults, only smaller.

### Crops protected

greenhouse crops  
field crops affected by spider mites or thrips

### Pests attacked

spider mite eggs, larvae, nymphs, and adults  
thrips  
fungus gnats  
small insects and their eggs



*Top: Mini bell peppers  
Bottom: Mango Tree*

### Predatory Mites

Predatory mites are among the most successful biocontrol agents. Their numbers can be very high on crops that produce a lot of pollen, such as sweet pepper, fruit trees, and sweet corn. Reducing use of insecticide sprays may also encourage predatory mite populations.



*Adult predatory mite with spider mite eggs.*

### Predators

Predators are beneficial insects that attack, kill, or consume a wide variety of common pests. Males, females, immatures, and adults may all be predatory. Predators include lacewings, flies, spiders, beetles, true bugs, and predatory mites.



*Photo Credits: Front Top Image - Acarina: Phytoseiidae by Ken Gray of Oregon State University & Local Hazardous Waste Management Program. Predatory mite feeding on western flower thrips larva by Marilyn Steiner, Mini bell peppers courtesy of ARS, Mango Tree by Asit K. Ghosh, Adult predatory mite with spider mite eggs from Natural Enemies of Vegetable Insect Pests, Praying Mantis w/ prey by Tam Stuart, www.tamstuart@comcast.net.*