

Springtails



Springtail (collembola.org)



Large mass of springtails
(collembola.org)



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Typical Location When Observed: Springtails are temporary invaders of homes during hot, dry weather.

Importance/Damage: Apart from the nuisance caused by their presence in homes, springtails generally are not considered pests.

Distinguishing Features: Springtails are very small (1/5 inch) insect relatives that get their name from a springlike mechanism that helps them jump.

Look-Alikes: None


General Life History and Habits: Most springtails live in soil, feeding on fungi, algae, decaying plant matter and bacteria. Some are predators of small soil animals, and a few may damage tender plants. However, springtails do not bite and are harmless to humans and other animals. Springtails can attain great abundance under ideal conditions – thousands per square foot. Overcrowding and soil drying may induce migrations. Springtails are well adapted to cool conditions, and some species are known as “snow fleas” because they can build up to large numbers on snow.

Resources: More details may be found in Extension Fact Sheet 5.602, *Springtails*.

Scientific Name: many species

Order: Collembola (springtails)

Family: Several families

Actual Length


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