



Class Insecta, Insects

Order Diptera, Flies, gnats, and midges

Diptera means “two wings,” and true flies bear only one pair of functional wings. Flies are one of the largest insect groups, with approximately 35 families that contain predatory or parasitic species. All flies have piercing/sucking/sponging mouthparts.

Predatory midges

Family Cecidomyiidae

Description and life history: Adults are tiny, slender, delicate flies. They have long slender legs and antennae. The larvae are actually brown-colored maggots, with anal spiracles located close together.

Prey species: Adults are attracted to and feed on aphid honeydew and floral nectar and are not considered as important for biological control as the larvae. The maggots are important aphid predators and are common in the field. Maggots also feed on mites, scales, whiteflies and thrips. *Aphidoletes aphidimyza* is a commercially available species and is considered very effective in greenhouses, providing season-long control of aphids. Encourage predaceous midges by providing nectar sources. Relatively few midges are predaceous.



Aphidoletes aphidimyza, predaceous midge larva, feeding on aphids. (322)

Photo: unknown



Aphidoletes aphidimyza, predaceous midge larva. (W42)

Photo: Whitney Cranshaw