

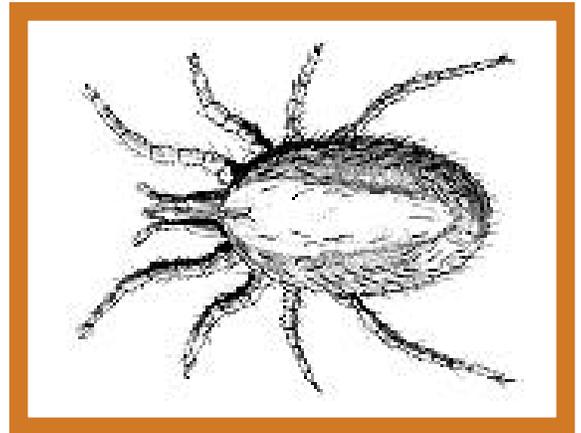
Common Biting Mites

Mites are small pests barely visible to the naked eye. In California, the most common biting mites include the tropical rat mite, the northern fowl mite, and the chicken mite. They feed on rodents, birds, and fowl and occasionally infest homes and bite humans.

Tropical Rat Mite

Ornithonyssus bacoti

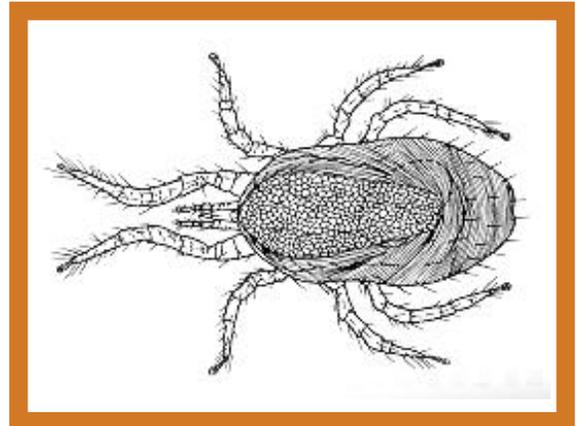
The tropical rat mite feeds on rats and occasionally bites people living in rodent infested buildings when rats have died or left the structure. Its bite may cause painful skin irritation for 2-3 days. Scratching may result in secondary infection. Not all family members may be affected by rat mites.



Chicken Mite

Dermanyssus gallinae

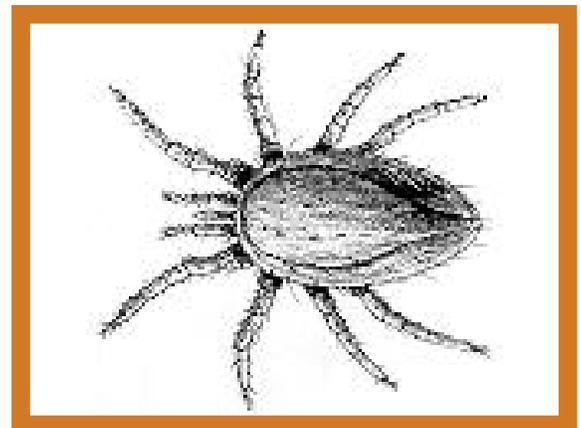
This mite is a parasite of chickens and other domestic and wild birds. They may migrate from the nests of their hosts and invade homes.



Northern Fowl Mite

Ornithonyssus sylviarum

The northern fowl mite lives on domestic and wild birds. It can become a pest to humans when birds that have been nesting in a home or other structure leave the nest or die and mites seek a new host.



Detecting Mite Infestations

Unlike fleas, which tend to bite on the ankles and lower legs, mites may bite anywhere on the body. Bites may occur where clothes constrict the body such as the waistline and under the arms. They may cause painful or itchy skin irritation on all or some family members.

Mites are usually most active at night. When searching for mites, a flashlight should be used to examine walls near heat sources such as hot water pipes, heating ducts, electrical fixtures, and around bedding. Mites usually retreat to dark spaces such as cracks and crevices between feedings.

Getting Help

San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control District provides identification of suspected mites. Please bring a sample to the District office for identification. Home inspections for bird or rodent infestation are also available. Schedule a service request by phone or online.

All District services are provided at no additional fee to county residents.

Controlling Mites

Control of mites is achieved by eliminating the rodent or bird host, removing its nest, and chemically controlling existing mite populations. Eliminating the hosts without controlling the mites will only increase mite feeding activity on humans. Mites can live up to six weeks without a blood meal.

- Trap rodents in snap traps. Never use rodenticides inside structures.
- Rodent-proof your home so that rodents cannot enter.
- Remove bird nests under eaves and in attics.
- Contact a licensed pest control operator for chemical control of mites.

San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control District

(650) 344 - 8592
1351 Rollins Road
Burlingame, CA 94010

Monday-Friday
8a.m. to 4:30p.m.

www.smcmvcd.org

