



MANURE FLIES: RAT-TAILED MAGGOTS AND MOTH FLIES

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Rat-tailed Maggots

The rattailed maggot is the immature or larval stage of a fly that resembles a honey bee. These 3/4 inch long whitish larvae are different from other fly maggots in having a 1/2 inch long "tail" that is used as a breathing tube when they are in the water.

The maggots can be a nuisance when they crawl away from their breeding site to find a dry place where they can transform to the adult stage. In this wandering stage, maggots may enter milking parlors, milk rooms, feed rooms, or other areas. Large numbers can be present in most any accumulation of stagnant water, such as manure pits or lagoons, where they feed on decaying organic matter.

Adults, called bee flies because of their resemblance to honey bees, are rarely seen. They do not remain around breeding sites like house flies do. Bee flies visit flowers for nectar but also will go to decaying odors where they may lay eggs. These flies neither bite nor sting and apparently do not carry diseases.

Rat-tailed maggots are seldom a problem in liquid lagoons where floating solids are kept to a minimum, the manure is completely covered with water deeper than the depth of the breathing tube, and banks are kept steep and free of emergent weed growth. Agitation of the pit contents or routine clean out, if practical, also can disrupt maggot development.

The tough-bodied larvae are usually not affected by even direct insecticide applications as they crawl along the ground. Placing a barrier of dry, loose soil or sand in the path of the wandering maggots generally will stop them. They will burrow into the soil and remain there. The soil and maggots can be shoveled up and discarded outdoors away from buildings.

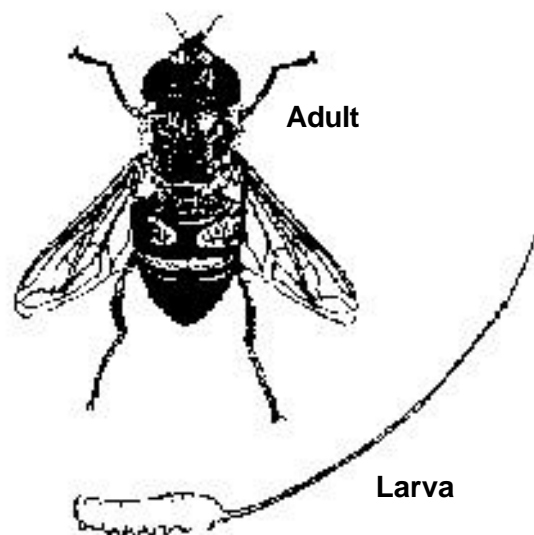
Moth Flies

Moth flies are easily recognized by their speartip-shaped wings which are covered with scale-like hairs. The adults live for about 2 weeks. They are poor fliers and often accumulate on walls or vertical surfaces near breeding sites. They do not feed

on humans or animals but can cause a sanitation problem in milk rooms. Moth flies swarm when disturbed and are small enough to pass through regular window screens.

The elongate larvae live in accumulations of stagnant water such as drain traps, wet manure, and wet leaves. Development from egg to adult takes about 2 to 3 weeks.

The adults can be killed by residual or space sprays that are used to control adult house flies. Solution of the problem requires that the breeding site be found and cleaned up or eliminated. Floor drains are a good starting place. Remove accumulations of muck in the drain and flush with scalding water.



RAT-TAILED MAGGOT