

DRIEDFRUIT BEETLE

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Driedfruit beetle, *Carpophilus hemipterus* (Linnaeus), and other nitidulids are sap beetles (Family: Nitidulidae). Sap beetles are attracted to wounds in trees or fruits, where they feed on plant juices associated with wounded tissue. Sap beetles can be very abundant if injured, very ripe, or decaying fruit is common. Driedfruit beetles are secondary invaders; they attack peaches where the fruit's skin has been damaged by disease, other insects, or mechanical injury. They can spread disease by transporting fungi, bacteria, or other rot-producing organisms on their bodies. Adults are black, about 1/8 inch (3 mm) long, and have reddish legs. Their wing covers are short, exposing the rear portion of the abdomen. Each wing cover has a tan spot near its tip and a smaller spot near its base. Adults are strong fliers that readily move about to find injured or fermenting fruit in which to lay eggs. Females lay perhaps 1,000 eggs, which hatch in about two days. Larvae are slender, white, active grubs with brown heads that grow for one to two weeks, attaining a length of about 1/4 inch (6 mm). They leave the fruit and pupate in the soil. Sap beetles can complete a generation, from egg to adult, every three weeks under favorable weather conditions. Therefore, numbers can increase rapidly in infested areas.

In peaches and other fruits, driedfruit beetles and other nitidulids are most problematic when blocks are being picked the last time, owing to the diminishing of the last pre-harvest insecticide application. If high populations develop, additional sprays may be necessary. Control focuses on the adult beetles, as there are no controls for the internal feeding larvae. Baits are also used. Several applications at weekly intervals may be needed to kill adults as they emerge. Insecticides are only moderately effective if ripe fruit is constantly available. Sanitation in the form of picking, along with removal and destruction of infested fruit, drastically reduces sap beetles.