

LivingWithBugs Guide

identification, life cycles and management

Bamboo Spider Mites

updated: 6/06

S*chizotetranychus celarius* (Banks), the bamboo spider mite, is a common pest of bamboo and occasionally of rice and sugar cane. In the US the mite has been found infesting ornamental bamboo in the southeast and the Pacific Coast states. These mites live in colonies under sheets of webbing on the underside of leaves (Fig. 1). Feeding results in chlorotic (pale, injured) areas on the upper leaf surface opposite the colonies (Fig. 2).

Feeding, reproduction and development occur chiefly under the dense webbing. This webbing protects the mites from adverse environmental conditions as well as natural enemies. Under ideal conditions a new generation of adults mites (Fig. 3) can be produced every 14 - 21 days.

Bamboo spider mite can be difficult to control once colonies are covered by the dense webbing. Early detection is therefore key to suc-

Spider mites develop through several stages. Eggs hatch into 6-legged **larvae** after about 3 days. Larvae molt into eight-legged **protonymphs**. Protonymphs molt into **deutonymphs** which have a resting period before finally emerging as adults. All active stages feed on the leaf surface.

cessful management. Table 1 lists materials that are registered for control of this mite. Good control has been achieved with Floramite when a

spreader/sticker is used at rates sufficient to cause spray droplets to spread, not bead up (see label for details). Spray coverage is key especially where colonies are covered by webbing. It is essential that material be applied to both leaf surfaces.

Biological control with predator mites is promising. Several candidates are being studied, however

Figure 1. Bamboo spider mite colony under webbing. Photo by Paul Pratt.

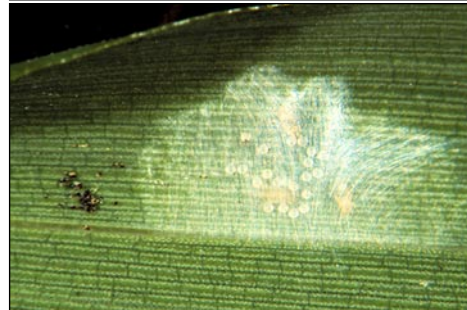


Figure 2. Bamboo leaf showing feeding injury from bamboo spider mite. Photo by Paul Pratt.



none are yet available commercially for release into bamboo nurseries. *Careful*, and *limited*, use of broad spectrum insecticides (instead of careless and heavy use) will increase the chances of natural predatory species moving in. The advantage of some predatory mites is their ability to get under dense webbing.
See www.LivingWithBugs.com for additional information.

Figure 3. Adult bamboo spider mite. Photo by Paul Pratt.



PRODUCT	MANUFACTURER	LABELLED SITES	COMMENTS
Avid EC	Syngenta	shadehouse, greenhouse, field-grown ornamental	moves readily from upper leaf surface to lower surface
Floramite	Uniroyal (Compton)	shadehouse, greenhouse, nursery	bamboo mite on label, use a spreader adjuvant according to label
Hexygon DF	Gowan	shadehouse, greenhouse, field-grown ornamental	active against eggs
Insecticidal soap	various	nursery, greenhouse	easy on beneficial predators, no residual activity
Pylon	Olympic Horticultural	greenhouse	see label for specific information

Table 1. Miticides labelled for bamboo spider mite (June, 2004).

Figure 4. Line drawing of bamboo spider mite with legs removed showing pattern of setae on dorsum (back). This view is possible only with slide-mounted specimens.

