

## The Clothes Moth and Case-bearing Clothes Moth

### Description

The common clothes (*Tineola bisselliella*) moth is very destructive. Damage to clothing occurs most commonly in dark, hidden areas, as under collars and cuffs, but sometimes the larvae are very active and may be seen crawling on clothes or on the floor beneath badly infested furniture

Moth larvae feed mainly on Katrin, which can be found in woollen items, furs and other natural materials.

Adult clothes moths have a wingspread of about 1 ¼ cm and that of the male is somewhat less.. The body is about ½ cm long with wings folded and golden-yellow with a satiny sheen. A tuft of reddish golden hairs on the head is upright and reddish-gold. Eggs are oval, ivory, and about 1mm long. Larvae of the Common Clothes Moth are a shiny, creamy white with a brown head, up to 1cm long. The larvae spin long threads and construct tunnels of silk. The full-grown larva is shiny, creamy white, and about 1 ¼ cm long

The Case-bearing Clothes Moth (*Tinea pellionella*) (pictured right) is less troublesome in fabric damage but can still be a serious pest. Its common name stems from the larval habit of constructing a tubular case from silk and fragments of surrounding materials.



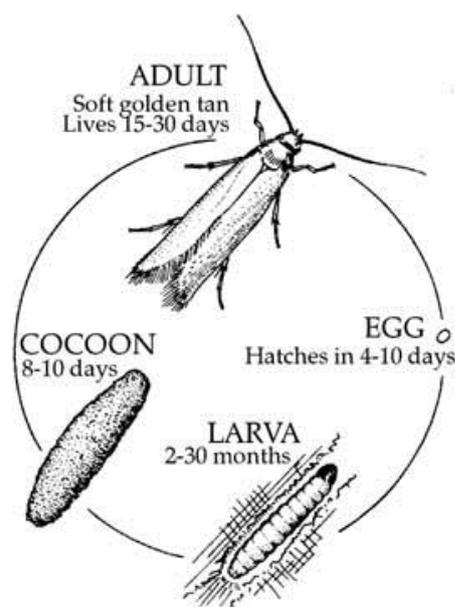
### Control

Their control is not always easy because the larvae hide in amongst clothes (which can often not be directly treated with insecticides) or within carpets (which are difficult to penetrate). Thorough cleaning deters moths but once you have a problem you will probably require chemical application, although some may prefer the trapping approach.

To treat cupboards and wardrobes we suggest you empty totally, clean, spray lightly with a suitable crawling insect spray (perhaps with the active ingredient permethrin), allow to dry, re-introduce the clothes. If you do not want to use chemicals you can place clothes in polythene bags (squeeze out air) and freeze them for 72 hours at maximum frost setting to kill larvae and most eggs.

To treat carpets, remember that these larvae will be deep seated in the carpet, you need to lift the edges and spray the reverse of the carpet up to at least 2 feet from the outer edge. Then treat the surface of the carpet concentrating on areas that do not get regular traffic. Test a small area for colourfastness before treating. Insecticides with the active ingredient of either bendiocard or permethrin are recommended. You may find that insect powders are more effective on carpets than aerosol formations.

You may need to re-treat after 30 days. Make sure you spray / treat under skirting boards as these can hide larval stages



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