

## Clothes Moth



The term "clothes moth" is properly used in connection with the **webbing clothes moth**, the **casemaking clothes moth**, and the **tapestry or carpet moth**. The first two species are more common, while tapestry moths occur only infrequently. These are all small moths, as adults have a wingspread of less than 1/2 inch. Their habits are different from most moths because they are rarely seen flying around lights at night. Rather, they prefer dark closets, attics or other areas and tend to live in dark corners, or in folds of fabric. They will fly occasionally, but normally only on the edges of a lighted area, so usually remain quite inconspicuous.

The **Clothing Moth** and the Case-bearing Clothes Moth (*Tinea pellionella*) are notorious for feeding on clothing and natural fibres; they have the ability to turn keratin, a protein present in hair and wool, into food. Clothing moths prefer dirty fabric and are particularly attracted to carpeting and clothing that contain human sweat or other liquids which have been spilled onto them. They are attracted to these areas not for the food but for the moisture. Moth larvae do not drink water; consequently their food must contain moisture. Fabric-destroying insects cause much damage each year. In addition to large losses in commercial fabric manufacturing and storage operations, the many small damages caused in households add up to a significant figure.



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