Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

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Virginia Cooperative Extension, Fairfax County Office, Master Gardener Program
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INSECT IDENTIFICATION REQUEST FORM

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(To be completed by Master Gardener receiving the sample)

Plant Clinic _____ Date_____

Master Gardener_____ (one name only)

EMAIL _____

Client - Please fill out this form as completely and accurately as you can. If your photos appear to be different insects/spiders, please use a separate form for each. If you are concerned about insect damage on plants, please use our request form for Plant Problem Diagnosis instead of this one. Print legibly.

CLIENT NAME: _____ **Date:** _____

ADDRESS (street, P.O. Box) _____

CITY, STATE, & ZIP _____

PHONE: _____ (number where you can be reached in the daytime)

EMAIL _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PHYSICAL AND/OR PHOTO SAMPLES

Physical samples - All samples should be whole, complete with all parts (antennae, legs, wings, etc.) attached to the body. Please do not submit mutilated or squashed specimens. Enclose specimens in sealed plastic containers only. Film canisters, pill bottles with tops that can be secured work well. Do not use glass containers, tape, zip-type bags, or envelopes. If the specimen(s) are active, a drop or two of rubbing alcohol in the container should calm them down. Securely attach this completed form to the outside of the container. If you are also emailing photos to help with this ID, check this box …… ☐

Photo samples - Send up to 3 digital photos that are clear and in focus. Cell phone photos are fine. Try to avoid strong shadows or photographing in poor light. Outdoor photos are best taken on overcast days. Indoor photos should have lighting from both sides. If you have a macro lens, that would be useful for the head closeup, but it's more important that it be in sharp focus.

Try to provide close up images of the insect or spider showing it from different angles, including:
- A photo of the head showing any antennae, eyes, and mouth
- An overall photo of the back, showing body and legs.
- For spiders, a picture of the web would be useful.

(OVER) –Complete reverse side

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Where did you find the samples?

In the home? Be specific, such as in the kitchen, pantry, laundry room, closet, sleeping area, bathroom, basement, attic, garage, dog/cat, etc.

_____

Outside the home? Be specific, such as around the garden, near the doorway, window casings, under overhangs, in firewood, around porches, decks, under pavers or stepping stones, etc.

_____

Approximately how many insect/spiders did you notice? _____

When did you first notice them? (Dates) _____

What time of day were they observed? _____

Are the insects attracted to light? _____

(Additional Information) - Provide any observations, background, or other information that might be useful.

Do you want recommendations for control of this insect/spider? (Check one) ☐ Yes, ☐ No

Physical Samples – Drop off your sealed container and completed form at a Master Gardener Plant Clinic or at the Virginia Cooperative Extension Fairfax County Office, see address in Page 1 header. Photos can be physically attached or sent by email to the address below.

Photo Samples - Submit your completed form and your photographs as attachments to an email message sent to **vceffxlab@gmail.com**. If you already submitted a form with physical sample, email should include that date and location.

If you also have a different insect or spider you want identified, use a second form for that insect or spider and submit that completed form with sample and/or photos separately.

A lab member may contact you for addition information or to request another photo or physical sample, if needed.