

Broad Mites on New Guinea Impatiens

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Not too many cases of broad mites have been seen over the past couple of years, though this season we've seen a couple of cases on New Guinea impatiens. Plants had distorted new growth – leaves appeared strap-like, twisted, with a downward curling or cupping of the leaf edge. Often a russetting can also be observed on foliage, stems, or buds. As infestations progress, terminal buds can be killed, flowers can be distorted, and plants will be stunted.

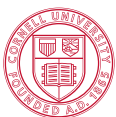
These mites are small (females are ~0.2 mm long, males are smaller), and can only be seen with the help of magnification – greater than 10x is necessary. The distinctive eggs or collapsed hatched eggs are a good diagnostic clue – eggs are pale white or translucent and oval shaped with rows of small raised bumps/dots on the surface. Eggs are usually found on the undersides of leaves.

Symptoms can occasionally appear similar to those caused by Western flower thrips feeding on young buds. In addition, some cultural problems, such as nutritional deficiencies, high salts, herbicide injury, or unfavorable temperatures, can also be mistaken for broad mite damage. On some plants chilli thrips injury can be mistaken for broad mite injury. If you are unsure if broad mites are the cause of the damage, contact your local extension specialist or diagnostic laboratory for assistance.



Healthy (upper right) and broad mite infested New Guinea impatiens.

Regularly inspect crops for symptoms, and rogue out heavily infested plants. Use good sanitation practices such as managing weeds, thoroughly cleaning the greenhouse, and avoiding working in areas of infested crops prior to healthy crops. Broad mites are reported to hitchhike on legs of whiteflies, so make sure to manage this pest if present.



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Numerous effective miticides are available to clean up broad mite problems. Some materials labeled for broad mite management include abamectin (e.g., Avid), chlorfenapyr (Pylon), fenpyroximate (Akari), and pyridaben (Sanmite). (Note spiromesifen (Judo) is an option for other crops, but is not recommended for New Guinea impatiens.)

Broad mites tend to hide within tender buds and new growth, often making it difficult to achieve good management with contact materials if spray coverage is poor; be especially careful to achieve good spray coverage with contact materials. Using a translaminar or systemic product can help; abamectin (e.g., Avid) and chlorfenapyr (Pylon) have translaminar activity (for some crops other than New Guinea impatiens spiromesifen (Judo) is another material with translaminar activity). Repeat applications are often necessary.

Note: As always, read pesticide labels for plant safety information and make sure to follow all label recommendations and restrictions. State or local restrictions apply in some cases; some materials discussed above may not be registered for use in all states.



Strap-like, curled/ cupped and twisted new growth of New Guinea impatiens, a result of infestation by broad mites.

In cooperation with our local and state greenhouse organizations

