



Dr. Bug's

Bugbytes

by Robert Cameron

It just mite be...

What is the size of a pencil dot, can climb walls, enter through screens and leave red stains if crushed? The answer is clover mites.

Clover mites are very tiny mites (about 0.75 mm) that are usually reddish in colour but can also be olive green or rusty brown. Their first pair of legs are very long and are held forward so that they resemble antennae. The immature stages of clover mites are bright red.

Clover mites are strictly plant feeders. They feed on about 200 different plants, including trees, shrubs, flowers, grasses and various crops. They are often associated with heavily fertilized lawns. Infestations usually occur in the spring and fall, as clover mites prefer cooler weather with ideal temperatures in the 18-20 degrees C range. They become inactive during hot, dry weather.

These mites are found on exterior foundations, walls, rocks, and patio stones and on interior win-

dow sills, floors, curtains and counters. It is their presence and not damage to plants or grasses, which is the main cause of concern.

Clover mites do not bite people or pets. Because they are so small, they are able to penetrate through tiny gaps around windows and doors, cracks and crevices and make their way into the house. They often become noticeable when they are on a light coloured background. If crushed, they will leave stains on drapes, carpeting, blinds etc.

Control should be done on the exterior. Treatments around the foundation and lower windows and doors will usually stop them from coming in and reduce the population size. Concentrate on cracks, joints where siding and trim meet and other similar areas that may act as harbourage sites. Because of their small size, it is difficult to seal them out. Inside, use the vacuum instead of wiping or brushing to try to avoid stains or smears.

People, plants and pride growing together

by Kim Pickering

The Town of Milton has entered this year's Communities in Bloom competition. Communities in Bloom is a Canadian organization committed to encouraging civic pride, environmental responsibility and beautification through community participation and the challenge of competition.

Milton will participate in the Ontario Competition and would compete against communities of like size (population 20,001 to 50,000). The town competed in the competition in 1999 and 2000, and judges that visited commented favourably on the tree planting in industrial areas, the city hall and courtyard beautification, the Horticultural Society, the Millennium Garden and residential gardens.

A Communities in Bloom submission is considered a long-term project. Every year, the accomplishments add up and the town's momentum grows. Judging empha-

sis is placed on the variety and use of trees, shrubs, and flowers, the appearance and upkeep of private and public green spaces and residential gardens, environmental awareness, tidiness, and the care and protection of heritage buildings and sites. There must also be participation from all sectors in the community (commercial, industrial, institutional and residential), including the municipality.

Interested organizations and individuals can contact the Milton Community Services Department for further information.

The Milton Hospital Auxiliary
21st Annual Strawberry Fair
Saturday June 16, 2001
8 am to dusk, Milton District Hospital grounds, 30 Derry Rd.
All day fun, food and entertainment. Opening ceremonies 9:45 am

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Neighbour helping Neighbour

Stop break-ins: don't give thieves any breaks!



Burglar-proof your home with these simple tips:

1. Give your home that "lived-in" look while you're away. Before leaving on a trip, leave the keys with trusted neighbours who can turn your lights and radio on and off, open and close your curtains, water your plants, bring in circulars, mow your lawn or shovel the snow, move your car or park theirs in your driveway.
2. Ask the post office to hold your mail and call the newspaper office to stop delivery while you're away. Notify the police department of your absence so that they can keep an eye on your home. However, it's not a good idea to advertise your impending departure in a public place or in the social pages of your local newspaper.
3. Inspect your premises on the eve of your departure. Store all your garden equipment, bikes and snow blowers; lock the garden shed. And remember to bring in that ladder! Don't leave your picnic table, trailer-tent or firewood against a wall. Cut trees and shrubs down so people can see what's going on on your property.
4. Leave the car in the garage when loading luggage. Why should uninvited guests know you'll be away?
5. A timer is inexpensive and effective, especially the multiple-program type. It gives your home that "lived in" look that thwarts scoters and robbers: there's nothing quite as effective as a light or radio that suddenly goes on.

Watch for further tips next month!

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