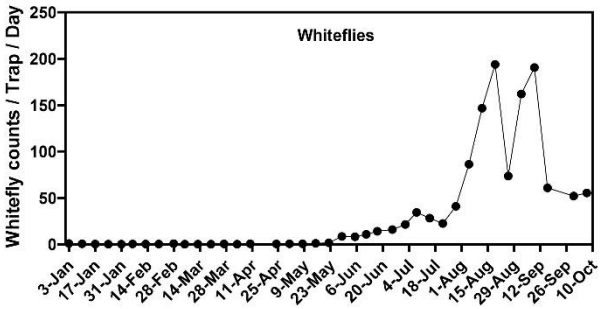
Area-wide monitoring of key insect pests across the Imperial Valley: 11th October 2025 updates

The adult insect counts from the monitoring trap network up to Oct 7th, 2025, are shown in the graphs below. Each dot in the graph represents the average insect count from 19 traps across the Imperial Valley for that sampling week, expressed as insect counts per trap per day.

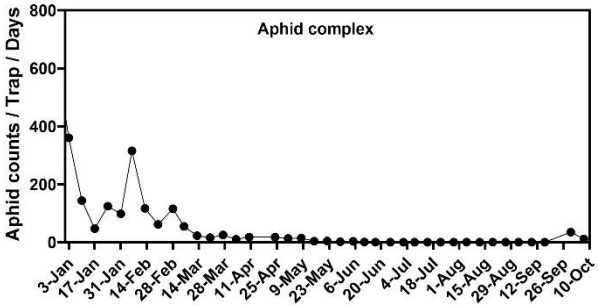
Whiteflies

The whitefly counts in the traps consisted mainly of sweetpotato whitefly (*Bemisia tabaci* MEAM1). A small fraction of the total count (< 5%) comprises bandedwinged whiteflies, *Trialeurodes abutilonia*, and other minor species. Although the adult whitefly counts in the traps have declined over the last three weeks, possibly due to repeated rainfall events and the general temperature drop, adults remain fairly active and show above-average counts compared to the previous year's data.



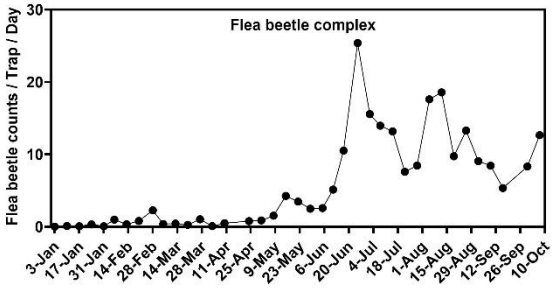
Aphids

The trap count data for aphids shows the aphid complex present in the Valley. We have observed near-zero counts in our traps since late May. However, as the temperature drops, their populations are increasing throughout the valley.

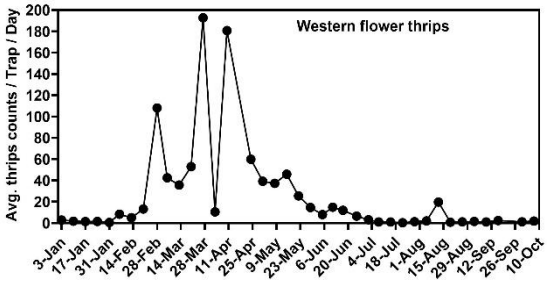


Flea beetles

The flea beetle counts in the traps comprised the pale-striped flea beetle, *Systena blanda*, the desert corn flea beetle, *Chaetocnema ectypa,* and a few other minor species. We are currently observing moderately high levels of adult activity across the valley.



Western flower thrips



While the traps capture several thrips species, only western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*, were counted to provide more specific data, as they are the primary thrips species of concern for several crops in the Imperial Valley. Currently, we are logging very low adult counts in the traps.

Pest notes

Bermudagrass stem maggot

We are observing an increasing number of Bermudagrass stem maggot adults (*Atherigona reversura*) in yellow sticky traps since early August. A survey conducted this August across 60 fields in the Imperial Valley found multiple bermudagrass fields with high levels of adult stem maggot populations and plant damage symptoms. Additionally, the most recent trap counts show that their numbers are further rising across the Valley. Some of these latest traps had very high BSM adult counts (Figure on the right). To learn more about this pest and how to manage it, please refer to this recent Ag. Briefs article (on page 101) discussing the pest, its damage symptoms, management options, and the findings from the recent pest population survey conducted across Imperial Valley bermudagrass production.

If you are interested in additional data or have questions or comments, contact Arun Babu at (442) 265 -7700 or arbabu@ucanr.edu.