Springtime and Springtails

By DoMyOwn staff

Why Springtails Love the Springtime

While springtails do not fair well in dry environments, they thrive on warmth, moisture, mold, and algae. For this reason, springtails can become a major nuisance in the spring as the weather warms but the ground is still nice and soggy from the moisture of winter. Springtails may begin appearing in mass numbers in the spring and summer in irrigated landscaped areas that are rich with soggy mulch, thick groundcover, and decaying yard debris.

When Springtails Get Inside

When Springtails swarm a homeowner's yard, we often hear complaints of the little critters finding their way indoors. This will probably cause alarm at first, but it should be remembered that the dryness of a home is not conducive to the survival of springtails. You might see that a small number have found their way inside and are bouncing around for awhile, but if they are unable to find a moist habitat they can do no more than cause a temporary nuisance and soon die. If the indoor population seems to persist, it may be associated with the damp soil of potted plants or a leaky pipe that had gone unnoticed. Removing these plants or fixing a leak will take care of the springtails.

Treat from the Outside-In

If a quick check indoors verifies that all conditions are dry, then your time should not be wasted chasing down the indoor strays. Instead, working to eliminate moisture and organic debris outside will be far more effective in reducing the overall problem. To keep springtails out of the house, consider the following outdoor fixes:

- Eliminate mulch layers in gardens that springtails love
- Remove piles of firewood or lumber that retain moisture
- Clear yard debris away from the home
- Even out the ground level by filling-in with dirt to adjust for low spots where the water settles from over-watering. These pools provide food and habitat for springtails.
- Create a clear zone around the immediate structure and keep it as dry as possible to keep springtails and other insects from making a comfy, cozy home next to the structure.
- Seal obvious cracks and entry points in the structure.
- Treat perimeter of the structure with residual insecticides, including inside cracks and crevices to intercept insects already hiding in those places.

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