

Garden Fleahopper on soybeans

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**Chris DiFonzo, Field Crops Entomologist
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824**

**Picture credits:
Bruce Mackellar (field pics)
Chris DiFonzo (close-ups)**



*Garden fleahopper on soybean.
Note the enlarged hind legs and
resemblance to flea beetle*

The garden fleahopper is a tiny insect that resembles a flea beetle – it is small, black and has fat back legs modified for jumping. However, garden fleahopper is a true bug, related to other sucking pests such as tarnished plant bug, alfalfa plant bug, leafhoppers, and aphids. Like aphids, fleahoppers have both winged and non-winged adult forms. Unlike aphids, there are both male and female fleahoppers, and they reproduce by laying eggs. The bright green non-winged juveniles, or nymphs, resemble large aphids, but are fast moving and active.



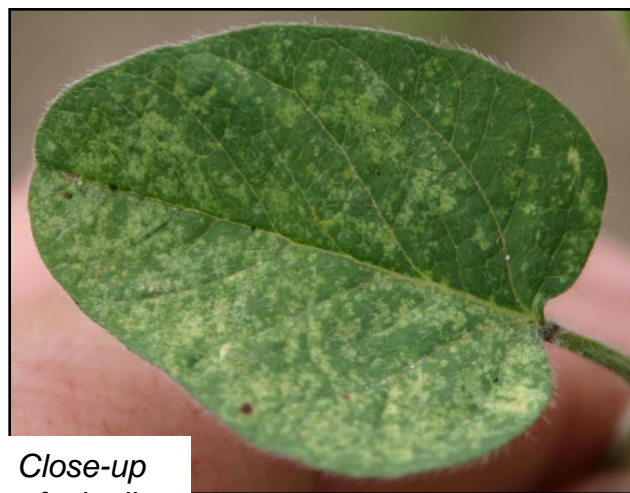
Winged adult



Non-winged adult

Like other true bugs, fleahoppers suck plant juices, damaging individual plant cells and creating yellow feeding spots (stippling) that resembles spider mite damage. However, damage symptoms may occur before mite populations typically increase in mid-July and August. Garden fleahopper is rarely present in large numbers, although it can build up in alfalfa, then move to a neighboring soybean field when the alfalfa is cut. Plants grow out of early-season feeding. There are no thresholds for later-season damage, which has not to my knowledge been reported in Michigan.

Evidence of fleahopper feeding on small plants



*Close-up
of stippling*