



Couch Mite

› **Scientific Name:** *Eriophyes cynodontiensis*

› **Order:** Trombidiformes

› **Susceptible Species**

- Couch Grasses (*Cynodon* spp.)

› **Description**

- **Immature/larval stage:** Translucent bodied mite invisible to the naked eye up to 0.13mm long.
- **Mature/adult stage:** Creamy-white mite with an elongated abdomen, body up to 0.2mm long.

› **Damage**

- Infestations are easily recognisable through the observation of plant injury in the field. Once visible injury has occurred, pest pressure must be considered to be extensive.
- Infected grass first exhibits a slight yellowing of leaf tips followed by shortening of internodes and leaves, producing a rosetted or tufted growth.
- Severe infestations result in stand loss, and large dead areas soon become infested with weeds.
- Damage is usually most severe during hot, dry conditions.

› **Biology and Lifecycle**

- Mites are active primarily during late spring and summer.
- Development from egg to adult requires 5-10 days. After eggs hatch, they pass through 2 nymphal instar stages and molt to adults.
- All life stages live together, protected under the leaf sheath, and often 100-200 mites and eggs can be observed under a single leaf blade.
- Mites are spread on grass clippings and have been observed hitchhiking on other turf insects.
- Dispersal in wind is also common.

› **Management Tips**

- Avoid excessive nitrogen applications.
- Mow closely to remove affected plant parts.
- Remove mower clipping from site.

Damage Magnified



Damage

