

## PEST CONTROL BULLETIN NO. 8

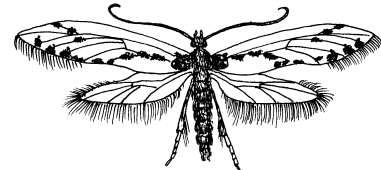
# CASEMAKING MOTHS



Case



Case with Larva



Adult

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Casemaking moths are named for the casemaking habits of the larva or caterpillar. The cream to grey colored case (3/8" to 1/2") carried throughout the life of the larva provides a safe enclosure from direct exposure to the environment, parasites, and predators. The case is tubular in shape and open at each end, and is made from silk fibers and fragments from its food material. The larva actually feeds from within the case, and will stay there until pupation occurs and the adult moth appears.

Two species of casemaking moths that are frequently encountered by Orange County residents include the casemaking clothes moth (*Tinea pellionella*) and the household case-bearing moth (*Phereoeca* sp.) recently imported from southeast Asia. The adult moth of either species is relatively small (wingspan of about 1/2") with similar wing colors ranging from mottled grays to straw. Adults often are found flying about indoors where the larvae feed either on stored woolen goods (clothes moth) or on hair and other organic remains (household moth) that accumulate along baseboards (carpeting) and the surfaces of draperies and fabric covered furnishings. Unlike the clothes moth, the imported case-bearing moth occasionally is encountered outdoors where the cases

can be found attached to walls, screens, and even window glass.

### CONTROL

The control of casemaking moths can be accomplished by a combination of chemical applications, repellents, and exclusion. Casemaking clothes moths found indoors can be managed simply by excluding these moths from woolen goods by storing garments and other items in sealable containers, zippered wardrobe pouches, and occasionally fumigating with an approved fumigant. Homeowners choosing to use fumigants indoors to either control or repel clothes moths should read the product instructions carefully and follow all the precautions stated by the manufacturer. Because household moths do not cause "measurable" damage and are perhaps more of a nuisance to homeowners, we recommend their control by a combination of vacuuming and removing cases by hand when found.

If a homeowner decides to use a chemical spray, use a product labeled for use against clothes moths and follow the instructions *to the letter*. In the case of an "extreme" infestation, the homeowner may want to obtain the services of a licensed pest control operator.



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