

Bag-forming clothes moth *Tinea pellionella* Linnaeus, 1758.

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The wool moth is a cosmopolitan moth of the tineid family. The larva of this species forms a tubular silk cocoon open at both ends, the cocoon often has an elliptical and flattened shape; adults are brown with three dark spots on each forewing. (Figure 1) [1-3].



Figure 1. *Tinea pellionella* Linnaeus, 1758. The adult moth has forewings that are pale brown speckled with grey and black. Each forewing has three vague dark spots. The hindwings are off-white, shading to fawn along the costas. The wingspan is about 1 cm. Source: Photo: courtesy of Jean-Francois Landry and Centre for Biodiversity Genomics, University of Guelph).

Bag-forming moths also have wings with long hairs on the margins, but unlike moths, they have three dark spots on their front wings and the hairs on their heads are not reddish. Furthermore, the caterpillars of this species build a silk sac around themselves that they usually occupy and which they never leave (Figure 2) [1-3].



Figure 2. The Caterpillar is off-white with a dark brown head, and a split dark brown shield on its prothorax. The caterpillar lives in a silk case covered in fibers from its food items. The caterpillar is a pest and is thought to feed on anything containing keratin. Sources: Photo: courtesy of Entomart and <https://lepidoptera.butterflyhouse.com.au/tine/pellionella.html>.

In its larval stage, in which it builds a silky shelter like a pumpkin seed. The larvae crawl along the walls of houses, feeding on fabrics, hair, and cobwebs, among many others. The wool moth feeds on plants and generally does not cause any major problems. (Figure 3) [1-3].



Figure 3. It pupates in its case and extrudes the pupa just before the adult moth emerges. Sources: Photo: courtesy of Entomart and <https://lepidoptera.butterflyhouse.com.au/tine/pellionella.html>.

References

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