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# Fungus Gnats & Shore Flies



Pest & Natural Enemy ID  
Greenhouse Scout School  
**Session 1: Jan. 22, 2026**

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# Part 1: Pest ID

Fungus Gnat



Shore Fly



Drain/Moth Fly

# Fungus Gnat, *Bradysia impatiens*

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## Damage

- Nuisance when in high numbers
- Larvae can chew and damage roots
- Larvae and adults can transmit some root disease pathogens



# Fungus Gnat, *Bradysia impatiens*

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## Adult

- 4-6 mm
- “Y” vein on the wings
- Long, slender legs
- Thin body
- Antenna longer than head but not longer than thorax





FG larvae have a black headcapsule



#### Larva

- Up to 8 mm when grown
- Clear to white body with black head capsule
- Legless
- Lives in soil, usually within top 2 inches of soil profile
- 4 larval stages

# Fungus gnat larval damage to roots



Photo: M. Daughtrey



Note the FG larva feeding on the stem at soil level

Monitor fungus gnats with  
yellow sticky traps



Y-shaped wing vein is diagnostic

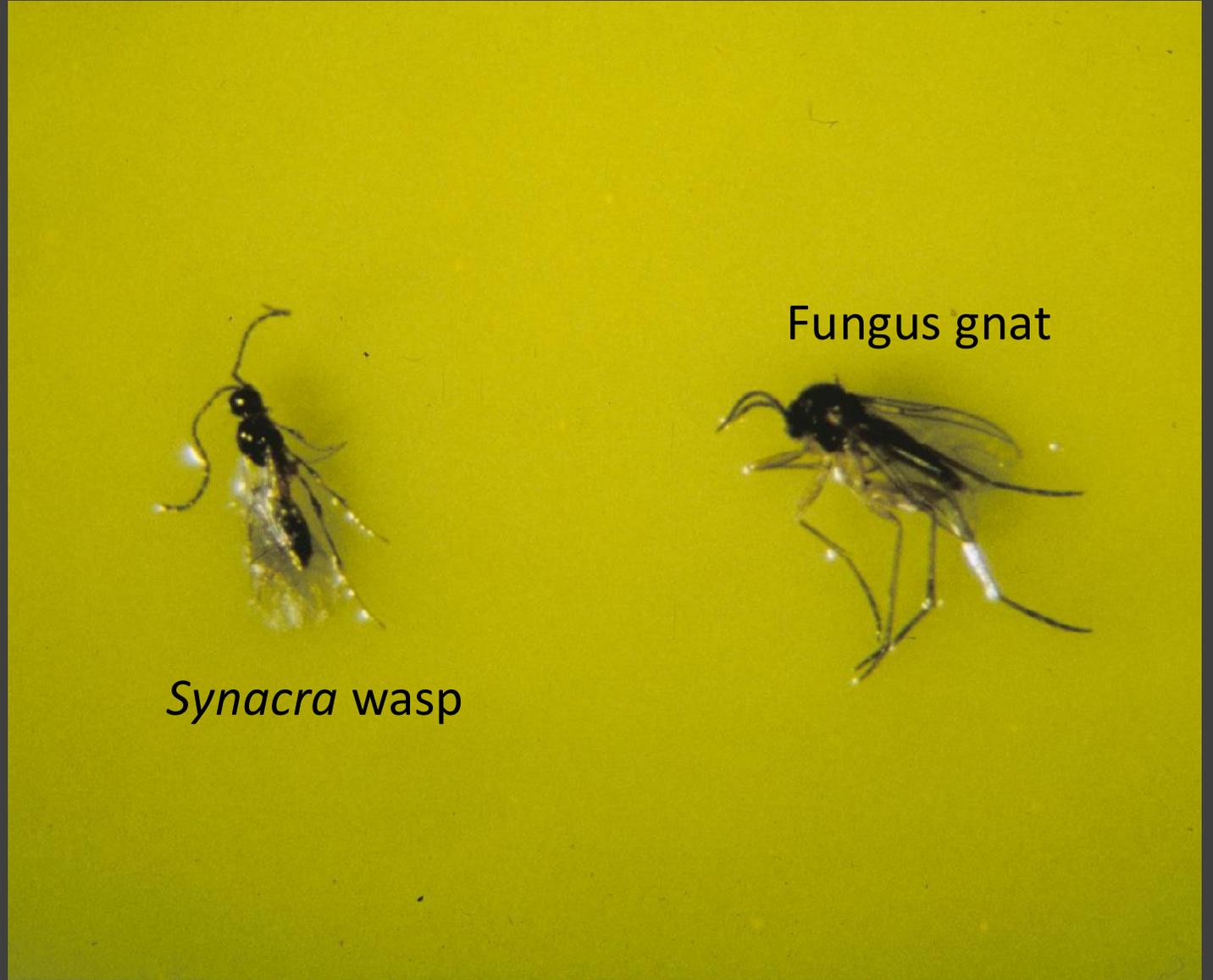


Yellow sticky traps will be the most  
common way that you'll monitor for  
fungus gnats

- Position yellow sticky traps vertically or horizontally.
- Horizontal will catch more FG
- Vertical will catch more of many other kinds of pests



# Insects that can be confused with fungus gnats



Note the long antennae of the wasps

Midges can be confused with fungus gnats

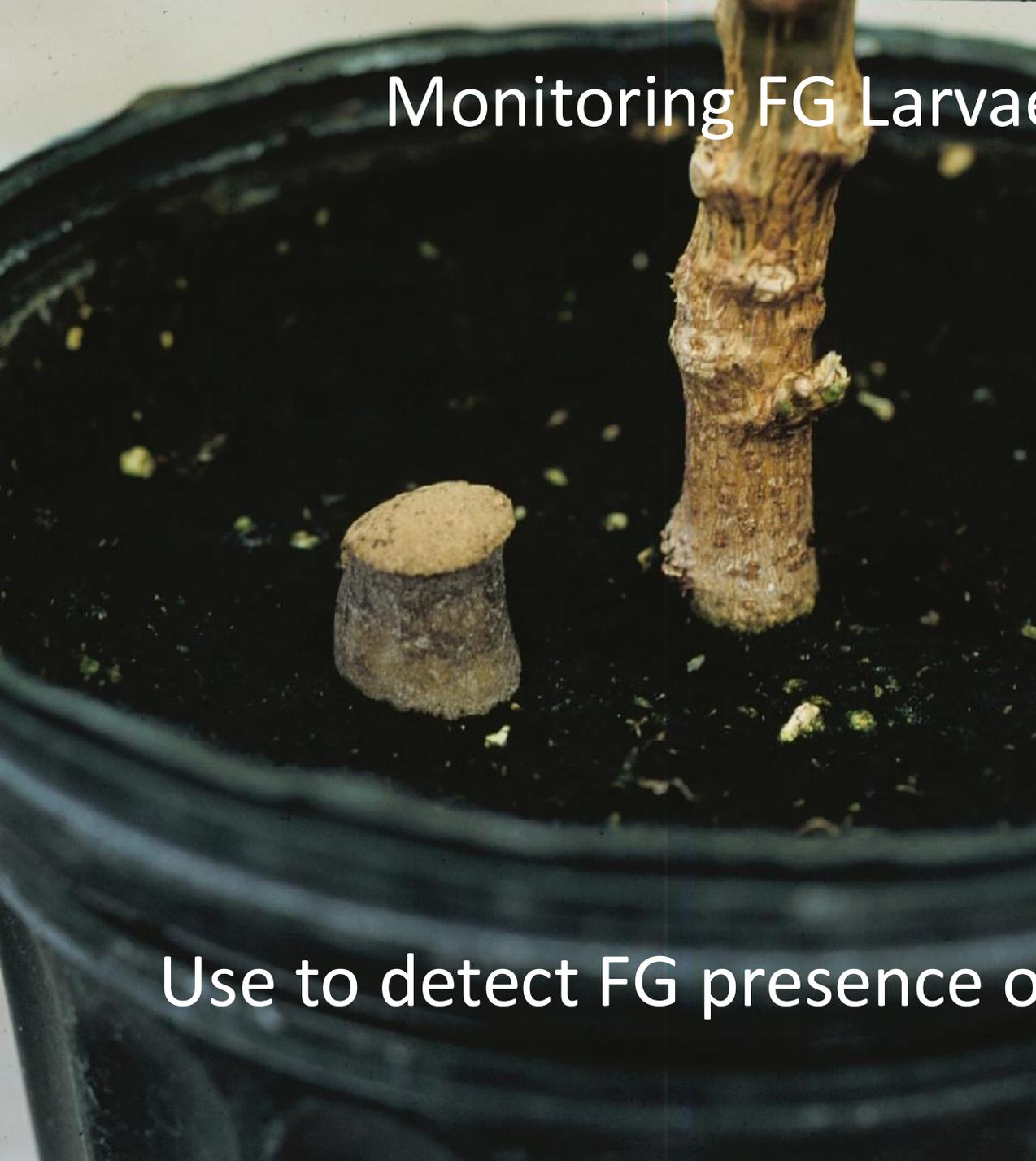
Midge

Fungus Gnat

Photo: Leanne Pundt



# Monitoring FG Larvae with Raw Potato



Use to detect FG presence or if control tactic is working

# Potato Wedge with FG Larvae



# Shore Fly, *Scatella tenuicosta*

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## Damage

- Nuisance in high numbers
- Can transmit root rot pathogens
- Can leave fecal specks on foliage



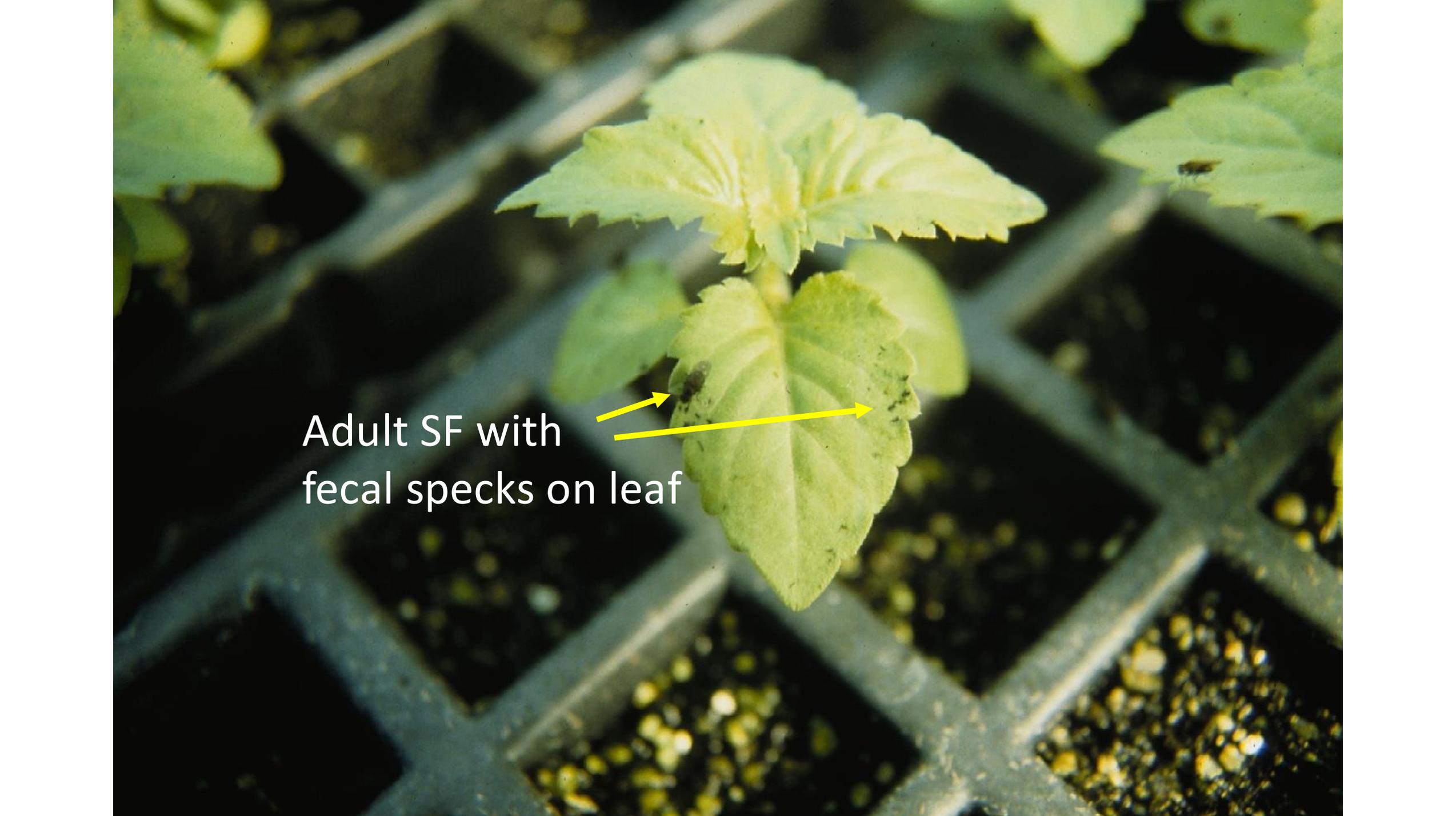
# Shore Fly, *Scatella tenuicosta*

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## Adult

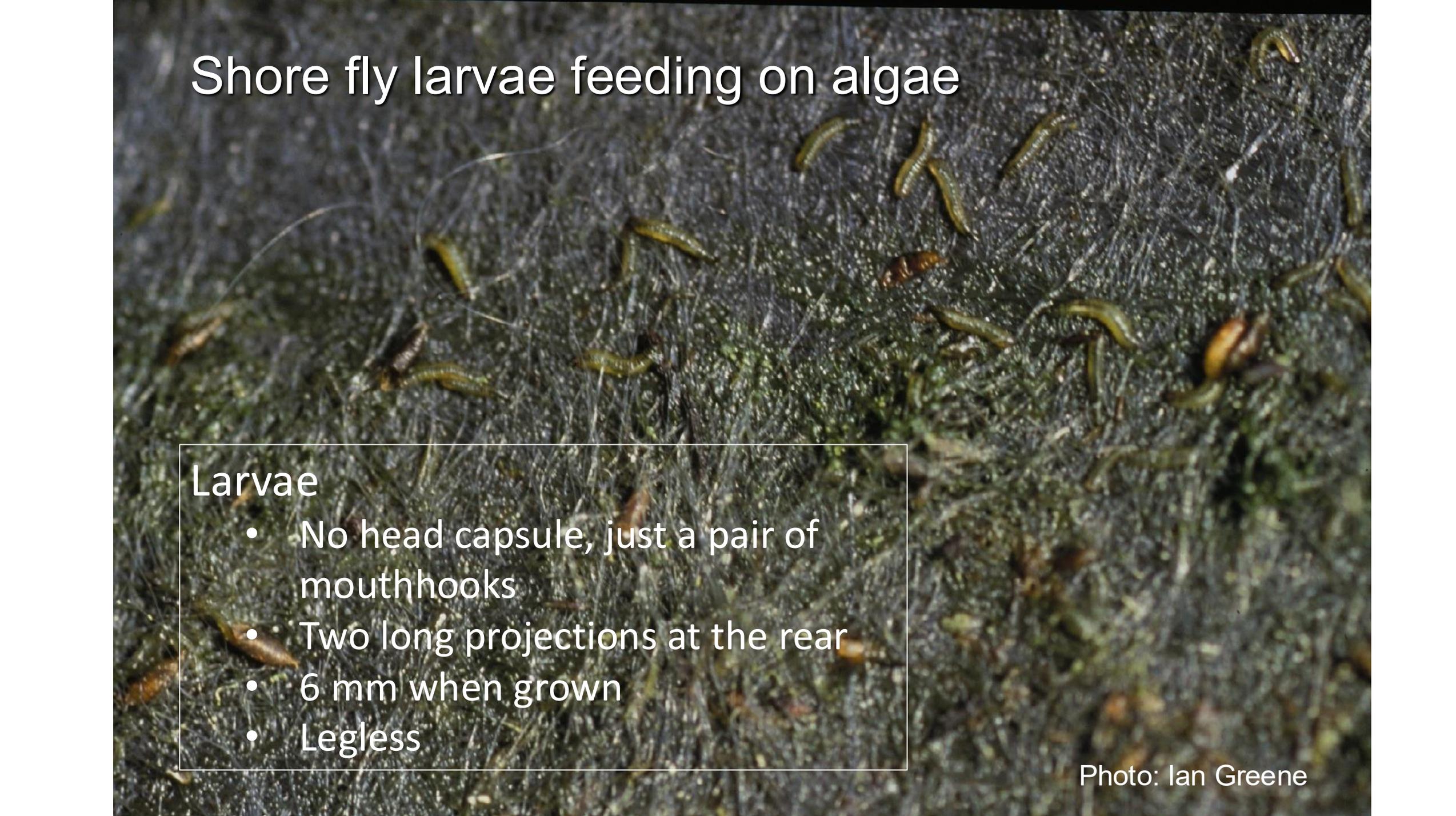
- 4-6 mm
- More robust body than fungus gnat, somewhat resembles housefly
- Gray wings with clear (white) spots
- Short bristle-like antennae
- Found on or near algae on various surfaces



A photograph of a young plant in a nursery tray. The plant has several light green leaves with serrated edges. One leaf in the lower center has a small, dark, oval-shaped insect (likely a Spotted Fly) and several small, dark, irregular specks (fecal matter) on its surface. Two yellow arrows point from the text to these features. The plant is growing in a dark tray with a grid pattern, and the soil is dark with some yellowish granules.

Adult SF with  
fecal specks on leaf

# Shore fly larvae feeding on algae



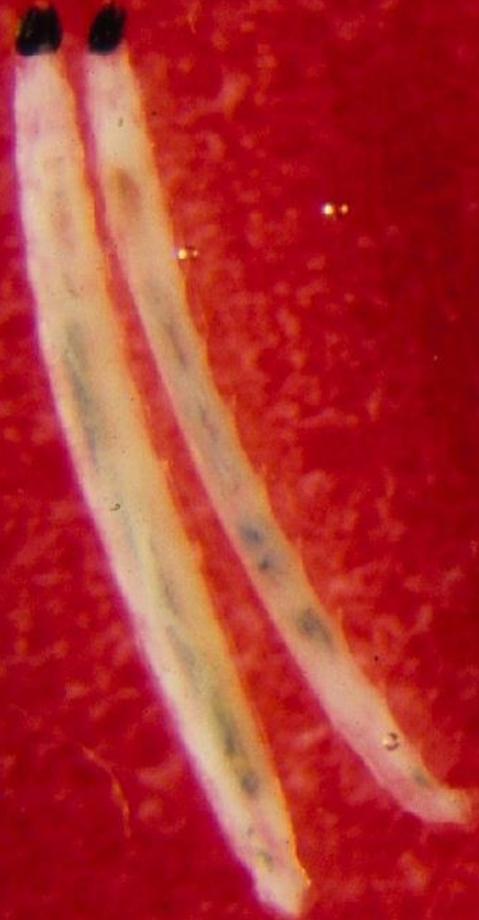
## Larvae

- No head capsule, just a pair of mouthhooks
- Two long projections at the rear
- 6 mm when grown
- Legless

Photo: Ian Greene

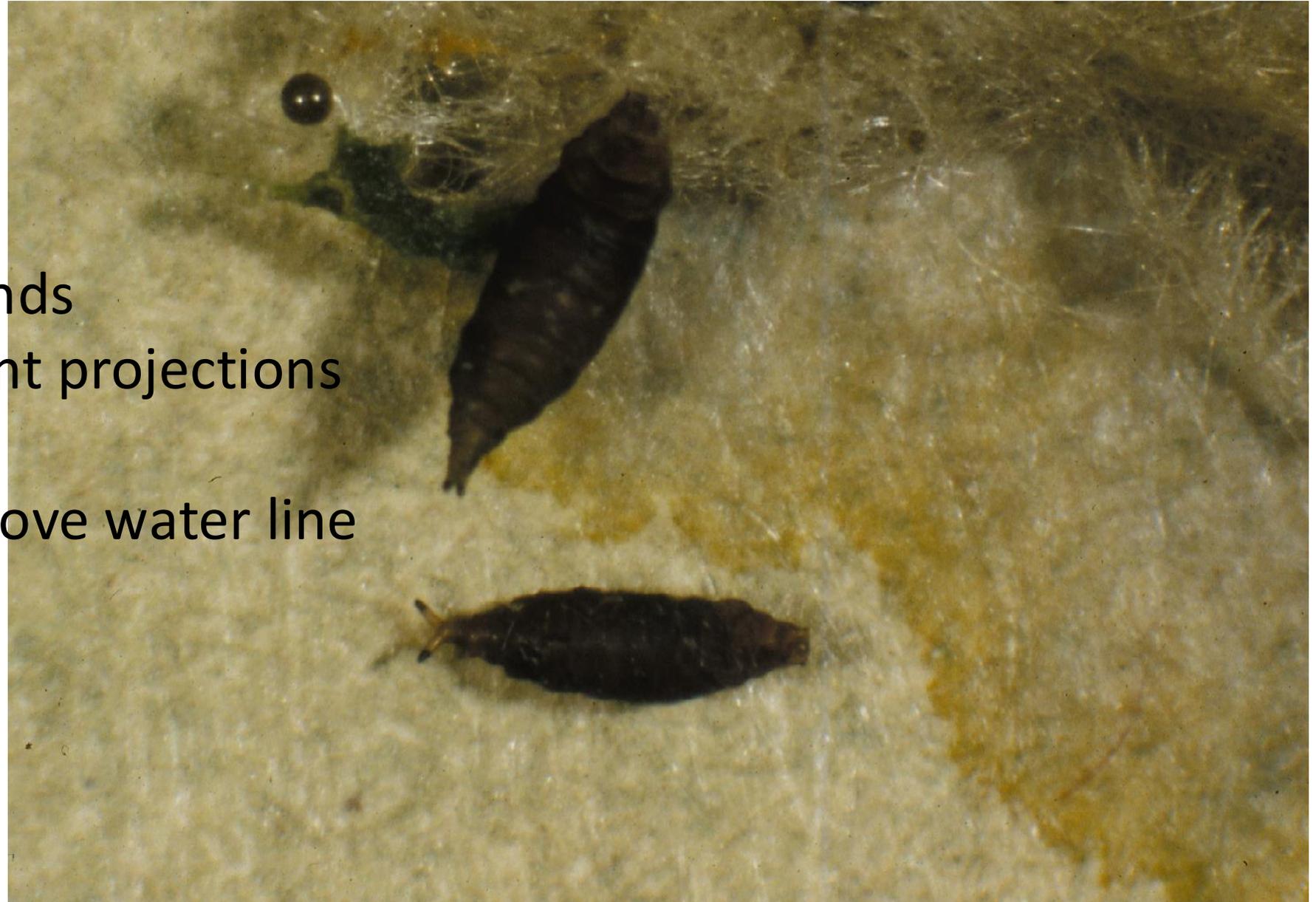
Fungus Gnat Larvae

Shore Fly Larvae



## Pupae

- 3-4 mm
- Dark brown
- Tapered on ends
- Two prominent projections (spiracles)
- Found just above water line



Shore flies may occur anywhere where there is algae



Use yellow sticky traps  
to monitor shore flies



Position yellow sticky  
traps vertically or  
horizontally for shore  
flies



# Drain/Moth Fly, Psychodidae

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- Damage
  - No serious damage



# Drain/Moth Fly, Psychodidae

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## Adult

- 4-6 mm
- Wings and body covered with hairs, looking moth-like
- Wings broad and pointed at tip, held roof-like over abdomen
- Long hairy antennae, obvious segments
- Found near drains, areas with poor drainage



# Drain/Moth Fly, Psychodidae

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- Can be captured on yellow sticky traps
- Usually smear the trap with their scales, making a tiny “mess”
- Can be used to reveal greenhouse areas with poor drainage





QUESTIONS?

