

Clothes moth wasps

Trichogramma pretiosum



Adult female (right) and male (left) *Trichogramma pretiosum* wasps (images: Denis Crawford)

Advantages of clothes moth biocontrol

- A great way to reduce clothes moth infestations without resorting to chemicals
- Break the lifecycle of clothes moths by killing them in the egg stage
- Quick and easy to use

How it works

Trichogramma are tiny wasps (less than 0.5 mm long) that parasitise clothes moth eggs. Female wasps lay their own eggs within clothes moth eggs. When the wasp eggs hatch, the wasp larvae eat the developing caterpillars inside the moth eggs. The wasp larvae then pupate inside the moth eggs and emerge as adult wasps.

This process takes 7 - 14 days depending on temperature and a female wasp can parasitise over 50 moth eggs during her lifespan of up to 2 weeks.

Pack size

- **Domestic pack** - 5 paper cups, each containing at least 2,400 wasps (total 12,000 wasps)
- **Sheet of release cards** - 60 release cards, each containing at least 1,000 wasps (total 60,000 wasps)

Storage and handling

- We send Trichogramma as parasitised eggs
- When they arrive, store at room temperature (out of direct sunlight) and wasps will emerge within a week
- Adult wasps cannot be stored for later use - they must be released as soon as they emerge

How many to release

- Adjust release rates depending on the level of clothes moth activity
- As a guide, use 1 cup (2,400 wasps) or 2-3 release cards (2,000 - 3,000 wasps) for each square metre of clothing storage space

When to release

- Release preventatively or at the first sign of clothes moth activity, then follow up with monthly releases until there is no further evidence of clothes moth

How to release

- If you ordered a domestic pack, check daily for adult wasp activity within the paper cups and open lids to release wasps as soon as they are visible
- If you ordered a sheet of release cards, you can separate and distribute them around your home immediately - wasps will begin to emerge approximately 24 hours after adult wasp activity is first observed within the indicator vial provided
- If ants are active in your home, place wasp release cups/cards inside a cup on a saucer filled with water to prevent ants attacking wasps before they emerge

Supporting strategies

- Store clothing that will not be used for some time in ziplock sealed plastic bags soon after washing to reduce the risk of infestation
- Use a vacuum cleaner to remove moths and larvae from furniture
- Clothes suspected of moth activity can be frozen for 3-4 days to kill the pests

Chemical use

- Many chemical products are highly toxic to Trichogramma wasps - avoid using pesticides in your home



Release cup



Individual release cards from sheet