

Die Blumen des Frühlings sind die Träume des Winters: The advent of spring spurs housewives to embellish their abodes with blossoms that often are reservoirs of perilous mites to skin

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Sir,

Donnish housewives love to adorn their living rooms and abodes with the very first spring flowers but they do not absolutely know that these flowers may bring in their homes fastidious mites, that may taint men, pet and furniture, howbeit they are not risky for the health of men and/or pet or for the integrity of whichever types of furnitures (wood or canvas or tapiseries).

This clover mite (*Bryobia praetiosa*) is a species of mite [1] and is 0.75–0.85 mm (0.030–0.033 in) long, oval shaped arachnids with a pair of long legs pointing forward often mistaken for antennae [2]. They are reddish brown; the younger ones and the eggs are a bright red. They are extremely common in springtime everywhere all through the entire world.

Clover mites are polyphagous, feeding on a wide range of plants, including “lawn grasses, ornamental flowers, clover, dandelion, shepherd’s purse, strawberry, daffodil, *Salvia*, *Alyssum*, and primrose”. [2]

They are especially numerous in lawns with a heavy growth of succulent, well-fertilized grass. They do not cause any apparent harm to turf grass, but their feeding activity can turn the grass a silvery color and may stipple plants when heavy populations are present.

Clover mites reproduce parthenogenetically—their eggs do not need to be fertilized and are entirely female. Females lay about 70 eggs each [3].

They generally enter houses close to thick vegetation and can infiltrate houses in very large numbers through cracks and small openings around windows and doors. Whether indoors or outside, clover mites are found more commonly in sunny areas than in darker areas. If squashed, they leave a characteristic red stain caused by their pigmentation [4].

This mite sometimes enters homes and other buildings by the thousands, causing panic among residents. Though they do not bite or cause health-related problems, clover mites can be a nuisance. If smashed when they crawl over carpets and drapery, the mites leave a red stain. Clover mites can be red, green or brown, and have front legs that are about twice as long as their other legs. They feed on clover, ivy, grasses, fruit trees and other plants. Well-fertilized lawns are favored. Clover mites enter homes when their food plants are removed or dry up. They are most active in fall, and will seek refuge in structures as colder weather approaches, when molting (shedding skin) and when laying eggs. Typical of many mite species, all clover mites are females capable of laying viable eggs without fertilization. They have no need for male mites!

They do not bite. They do not sting. And they do not transmit diseases like rodents, cockroaches, and other household pests.

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They are, however, harmful in other ways - like when they invade porches or homes in great numbers.

Clover mites do not bite humans or animals. They will, however, attack plants, grass, and leaves.

The mites are very sensitive to temperature and may be killed if exposed to temperatures above 39°C. Under temperatures below 24°C, the eggs are stimulated into dormancy. They are generally active during spring and fall and are usually inactive during summer and winter.

Clover mite infestations cause various types of skin eruptions including papulosquamous eruptions, urticarial lesions, and bullous eruptions.

Such kinds of dermatoses or skin allergies may be treated with a simplest plant (*Stellaria media*, foliae et semen) that grows everywhere, curiously in the same periods of the year when the clover mites actually live and reproduce.

Stellaria media, is an annual flowering plant of the family Caryophyllaceae. It is native to Eurasia and naturalized throughout the world, where it is a weed of waste ground, farmland and gardens. It is sometimes grown as a salad crop or for poultry consumption.

Stellaria media is edible and nutritious, and is used as a leaf vegetable, often raw in salads.

It is one of the ingredients of the symbolic dish consumed in the Japanese spring-time festival, Nanakusa-no-sekku. Some varieties or similar species may be too fibrous to eat

It is also eaten by chickens, wild birds, and mountain sheep.

Chickweed contains plant chemicals known as saponins, which can be toxic to some species (notably fish). It is unlikely that most land animals will be affected, as the quantities involved are not large. However, it is not advised for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers.

It is said to have medicinal properties [5,6]. and is used in folk medicine. It has been used as a remedy to treat itchy skin conditions and pulmonary diseases.

17th-century herbalist John Gerard recommended it as a remedy for mange. Modern herbalists prescribe it for iron-deficiency anemia (for its high iron content), as well as for skin diseases, bronchitis, rheumatic pains, arthritis, and period pain.

Not all of these uses are supported although by scientific evidence.

The plant was used by the Ainu for treating bruises and aching bones. Stems were steeped in hot water before being applied externally to affected areas.

The anthraquinones emodin, parietin (physcion) and questin, the flavonoid kaempferol-3,7-O- α -L-dirhamnoside, the phytosterols β -sitosterol and daucosterol, and the fatty alcohol 1-hexacosanol can be found in *S. media*. Other flavonoid constituents are apigenin 6-C-beta-D-galactopyranosyl-8-C-alpha-L-arabinopyranoside, apigenin 6-C-alpha-L-arabinopyranosyl-8-C-beta-D-galactopyranoside, apigenin 6-C-beta-D-galactopyranosyl-8-C-beta-L-arabinopyranoside, apigenin 6-C-beta-D-glucopyranosyl-8-C-beta-D-galactopyranoside, apigenin 6,8-di-C-alpha-L-arabinopyranoside.

The plant also contains triterpenoid saponins of the hydroxylated oleanolic acid type.

Are these special triterpenoid saponins derived from oleanolic acids that play a crucial role in biological activities and pharmacological applications. It has been found effectively that they have diverse activities, including hepatoprotective, anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, but especially dermal anti-allergic and immunomodulatory performances, anti-tumor, molluscicidal, and anti-alzheimer's disease activities. These bioactivities are closely related to the traditional effect of treating carbuncle and furuncle, mitigating swelling, curing pharyngitis, erysipelas.

In Italy, *Stellaria media* is reputed a gourmandise in Liguria where is called anagallide, brutture, canta gaine idest herb that let hens sing, cardelina, erba canaina and its leaves collected in spring and summer are used to prepare a wonderful Pesto Genovese, with Vessalico garlic, San Sté aged cheese, Taggiasca olive oil., and pine nuts from *Pinus pinaster* of Borzonasca, and this pesto represents a marvellous seasoning for troffie (hand made pasta with no eggs) boiled in water with Quarantina potatoes, Rezzo chestnuts and broad beans from Golfo dei Poeti.

Leaves and seeds collected at end of summer are to be boiled for 40 minutes (decoction) to be mixed with

fresh cream or tallow or suet and to be spread upon the affected skin areas in order to treat dermatitis evoked by Clover mites.

Consent

The examination of the patient was conducted according to the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki.

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