

Pirate bugs (*Deraeocoris* and *Anthocorids*)

Identification

The adult has an oval-shaped, flat body that is 4 to 6 mm in length. They have a black head and body and a tan wing pattern. The adult *Deraeocoris* is twice as large and stouter than the adult *Anthocorid*. Pirate bug nymphs are pinkish-grey when they first emerge and turn to a light grey with darker marking as they grow. They resemble the minute pirate bug larvae but are larger, roughly 4 mm in length.

Preferred food

Pirate bugs will consume aphids and other soft-bodied insects, but their preferred diet includes mites (30 or more a day) and pear psylla (especially the eggs).



*Above Left: Adult *Deraeocoris* and adult *Anthocorids**
*Above Right: Adult *Anthocorid* nymphs*

Life cycle

Pirate bugs overwinter as adults and become active when daily temperatures exceed 10°C. Egg incubation usually takes three days, and development from egg to adult requires approximately twenty days.

Nymphs can be present in late spring and late summer as two overlapping generations can occur during the growing season.

Status in ornamental plants

Pirate bugs are occasionally seen in landscape settings and in nurseries. However, they are far more common in commercial tree fruit orchards and are an important predator of pear pests.