



Chorioptic mange mite

Chorioptes bovis

Description: oval-shaped, whitish-gray mites; the females up to 1/50 inch long; first three pairs of legs about as long as width of the body, last pair much smaller; a single, long, hairlike seta projects from near the terminus of each of the third pair of legs.

Domestic animals affected: cattle, horses, sheep, goats (a different but morphologically indistinguishable variety or subspecies for each species of host); common in cattle and sheep but seldom diagnosed.

Damage caused: a relatively benign mange characterized by patchy areas of roughened skin that is sometimes scabby at the edges; favored sites on cattle and horses include feet and lower hind legs; on cattle, also the tailhead, escutcheon, inside the rounds, and just in front of the udder; itching causes scratching and rubbing resulting in broken hair and some hair loss.

Development: gradual metamorphosis: egg, 6-legged protonymph, 9- legged deutonymph, adult.

Generational time: probably as little as 10 to 14 days.

Oviposition site: on the host's skin surface, especially under flakes of skin or scabs.

Nymphal habitat, feeding: same as for the adults.

Adult habitat, feeding: Chorioptic mites live their entire lives on the surface of the host's skin, feeding on exfoliated skin cells; in advanced infestations, they may feed on healthy epidermis. They do not burrow, but may aggregate beneath the edges of scabs formed in response to their feeding activity and the host's scratching or rubbing for relief from itching.

Method of dispersal or infestation: primarily by host-to-host contact but also via bedding, grooming equipment, etc. exposed to infested animals *of the same host species*; also by host mobility and transportation of infested hosts.

Seasonality: year-round, but signs of infestation are often more evident during cooler months; on outdoor animals, high skin temperature from sunshine is detrimental to *Chorioptes* mites.

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