

# POINSETTIA THRIPS

## HAVE YOU SEEN THIS THRIPS?

The Ministry for Primary Industries, in partnership with industry is investigating the distribution of the Unwanted Organism, Poinsettia thrips (*Echinothrips americanus*), after detecting it in an Auckland greenhouse.

**Your assistance is required to help us to determine if the Poinsettia thrips has spread in New Zealand.**

The Poinsettia thrips is an emerging pest of greenhouse and nursery plants. Originating from eastern USA, it has spread through some parts of Europe and Asia, where it is considered a greenhouse pest.

In New Zealand, this thrips is not expected to survive outside of a heated environment. To date it has been found in only one Auckland greenhouse.

### IDENTIFICATION

Like other thrips, the Poinsettia thrips is small, adults grow to about 1.7mm in length. To the naked eye they appear dark brown/black in colour, with a paler band across the body (their forewings are pale at the base). Thrips larvae are mostly whitish yellow.

### WHERE AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Poinsettia thrips are more common on the underside of leaves. They feed on leaf tissue and parts of the flower, causing light spotting damage very similar to typical mite or other thrips damage.

Feeding damage may result in injured tissue with a shrunken appearance; infested leaves may have numerous black specks on them (faecal droppings of the thrips).

### WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT I HAVE SEEN OR TRAPPED POINSETTIA THRIPS?

Collect leaves with specimens into a zip lock bag and put in a freezer.

Contact the MPI Exotic Pest and Disease hotline on **0800 80 99 66**.



Close-up, showing paler band



Arrows show the paler band on thrips



August 2017