

# Bug of the Month

by Jim Revell / May 2016

## Black Cherry Fruit Fly | Eastern Cherry Fruit Fly



Cherry Fruit Fly adults (about ¼ inch long) are black flies with yellow heads and a bit smaller than your common house fly. There is a white or cream-colored dot between the base of the wings. Using the dark markings on the wings, one can distinguish between the species (see the chart below right comparing wings of the Eastern Cherry Fruit Fly, Black Cherry Fruit Fly and Apple Maggot, often mistaken for a fruit fly).

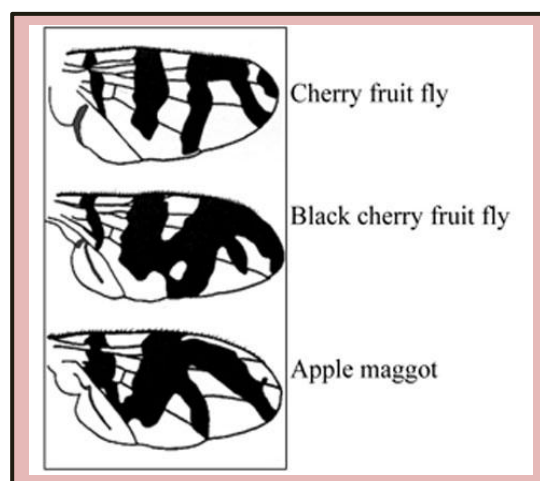
Other differences include the abdomen of the Black Cherry Fruit Fly, which is entirely black, while that of the Eastern Cherry Fruit Fly is marked with a series of four white crossbands (seen in the above photo). Also, although both species appear in most fruit-growing states in eastern US, *R. fausta* extends only as far south as PA.

Cherry Fruit Flies spend most of their life (give or take ~10 months) in the soil beneath the trees. The adults emerge in late May to early July to lay eggs in the fruit.

Using yellow sticky cards to monitor their emergence will help to alert and tell when spraying will be needed. Eggs and the hatch maggots are protected from insecticides, so control must be exercised when adults are active. Spraying should be done at the first sighting of adults before the fruit is damaged.

The yellow sticky cards need to be monitored twice each week. There is usually 10 days between adults emerging and egg-laying. Black Cherry Fruit Flies emerge 10-14 days before Eastern Cherry Fruit Flies. During this time, the adults feed on aphids of the Honeydew Melons and other sources.

Eggs hatch in about four days to a week, and the white/cream-colored maggots feed for about two weeks, then drop to the ground and burrow into the soil. They pupate at one to two inches below soil surface and, fortunately, only produce one generation per year.



### Photo References:

Black & Cherry Fruit Flies: [Fruit\\_fly\\_comparison\\_6-10-14.jpg](#)

Wing Markings: [Fruit-fly-chart-6-10-14.jpg](#)

Both at website: [msue.anr.msu.edu/news/cherry\\_fruit\\_fly\\_monitoring\\_and\\_management](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/cherry_fruit_fly_monitoring_and_management)

### Research References / Resources:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/fruit/integrated-pest-management-for-home-stone-fruit-growers/cherry-fruit-flies/>

[nysipm.cornell.edu/factsheets/treefruit/pests/cff/cff.asp](http://nysipm.cornell.edu/factsheets/treefruit/pests/cff/cff.asp)

<https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef217>

[http://www.ipm.msu.edu/insects/cherry\\_fruit\\_flies](http://www.ipm.msu.edu/insects/cherry_fruit_flies)

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Read more of his articles on the "Jims Bugs" page @ [www.BedfordMasterGardeners.org](http://www.BedfordMasterGardeners.org)