

Chilli Thrips Wreaking Havoc!

By Kitty Belendez, Master Rosarian

Chilli thrips insects have again returned to Southern California. I doubt they went anywhere, they were just hiding over the winter until the heat returned. I shot photos of the chilli thrips damage on the top stems of my roses on August 26, 2018. The foliage and blooms are horribly stunted and distorted. See photos below.

Following my usual springtime weekly spray regimen alternating water soluble *spinosad* and *imidacloprid*, the first week in May, I applied granular Bayer Advanced 2-in-1 fertilizer containing *imidacloprid*, and then did not do any subsequent applications or spraying over the summer. For three months I didn't see any regular thrips, chilli thrips, spider mites, or any other insects. Just a few spiders.

You cannot see chilli thrips, only the damage they do. Now in August, the chilli thrips have returned with a vengeance. The roses in our parkway along the street are the worst of all, which I suspect is because the blacktop street reflects extreme heat onto the roses. Chilli thrips love heat! It's scary, but I followed my schedule of trimming 1/3 off every bush the last week of August, then 10 days later when Bob was finished trimming, I sprayed all the roses with alternated rotations of *imidacloprid* and *spinosad*. But too late! Chilli thrips are already on the new growth. Next year I need to spray when halfway through trimming the roses, before the chilli thrips can grab hold.

As some SoCal rose growers know, we did not see chilli thrips here in California until just three years ago, August 2015. Although in retrospect, I believe I had seen them several years before that but **mistakenly thought the damage was caused by RoundUp.** **Some mistake chilli thrips for rose rosette disease.** The chilli thrips migrated to SoCal from Florida and Texas. The scientific name for chilli thrips is *Scirtothrips dorsalis*.



PHOTO BY KITTY BELENDEZ

Chilli Thrips Cause Distorted Rose Foliage



PHOTO BY KITTY BELENDEZ

Chilli Thrips Ruined Blooms of 'Sexy Rexy'



PHOTO BY KITTY BELENDEZ

Purple Damage on Reverse of Rose Foliage



PHOTO BY KITTY BELENDEZ

Brown Streaks on Reverse of Rose Foliage



GARDNER & BLOOME Rose & Flower Fertilizer

On Our Raffle Table

Our good friend at Kellogg has donated bags of Gardner & Bloome Rose & Flower Fertilizer to the Santa Clarita Valley Rose Society. It is a premium blend containing wonderful ingredients. We will put some on our raffle table at our monthly meetings.

INGREDIENTS: Bone meal, dried poultry waste, elemental sulphur, feather meal, kelp meal, alfalfa meal, and potassium sulphate. Plus various bacillus and mycorrhizae. NPK: 4-6-2

Nitrogen: 4%
Phosphate: 6%
Potash: 2%

