

# Frangipani leaves

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Frangipani trees are prized in tropical gardens for their broad shiny leaves that give shade and for their beautiful flowers.



Tiny flies (*Chloropidae*) are often found in good numbers in the flowers but otherwise there are few resident insects in the flowers and on or under the leaves until they begin to age. As that happens over six months a small habitat appears on the back of each yellowing leaf. Residents that gather under the yellowing leaves are small and not often thought of as important or exciting: but who decided that being small and/or short-lived in a temporary habitat makes something uninteresting?

The backs of fallen Frangipani leaves are often covered in orange powder.



The close-up image below, showing the back of a yellowing leaf that's still on the tree has the orange dusting in more detail.



The powder is commonly called *frangipani rust*, a fungus *Coleosporium plumierae* that leads to spots on leaves that gradually turn completely yellow and eventually drop, but it doesn't affect the long term health of the tree that is semi-deciduous and grows new leaves.



The small 2 mm lady beetle above is frequently found on older yellow frangipani leaves where it preys on small insects. Pupating nymphs are sometimes also found on these leaves and we consider it to be a resident predator.



### **More predators**



Sac spiders spin webs on the undersides of leaves to catch prey.



One species of jumping spider (*Salticidae*) is frequently found on these leaves: an adult (above) with eggs, and a juvenile (below).



These spiders are free ranging hunters that normally do not make webs.



## Herbivores

### Aphid



We find occasional aphid but not the high density infestations that occur on roses and other garden plants.

### Thrips



A 2 mm unidentified thrips that seems to prefer frangipani as a host plant.

A second thrips



An unusual 1.5 mm insect that appears to be a thrips engorged with honey dew We find these sometimes on yellowing leaves that are still on our tree.



Another individual



## Soft scale



Juvenile female wax scales soon after settling in their permanent positions. A more mature specimen of some months is below.



This specimen is doomed when its yellowing leaf falls.

An small armoured scale found only under frangipani leaves.



## Mites

Spider mites are listed on the web as a common “pest”.



We do not find large numbers of mites (in the mm range) on our tree or neighbouring trees, but we do have images of occasional mites one at a time. They are present but in low numbers.