

Weeping Ficus Thrips (*Gynaikothrips uzeli*)

Distribution: Originated in southeastern Asia. Introduced into the U.S.: several southeastern states and California.

Hosts: Weeping fig (*Ficus benjamina*) is the only plant on which *G.uzeli* successfully completes its life cycle.

Damage: *G.uzeli* induces galls (leaf folds) which create a safe environment for adults to deposit their eggs and immatures to develop. Feeding leaves reddish spots on the damaged foliage. Heavy infestations may retard the growth and lead to defoliation of the host plant. Weeping figs planted in the pots are the most vulnerable.

Field ID: Adults (2.5-3.0 mm long) have brownish-black bodies and are very similar to Cuban laurel thrips (*G. ficorum*). Females are larger than males.

Larvae initially translucent white, gradually turn yellowish-tan with several dark colored posterior abdominal segments. Eyes are red.

