

Orius laevigatus – predator of great importance in biological control

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Orius laevigatus is a predator from the family *Anthocoridae*, which is widely used for the control of thrips and in particular *Frankliniella occidentalis* in various crops and climates. It is used in vegetable production both in greenhouses and in the open field, and is of particular interest in pepper, strawberry, eggplant and some ornamental plants.

It is also successfully applied in biological control of *Drosophila suzukii* Matsumura (Diptera: Drosophilidae).

Adults are about 3 mm long, black in colour, and are very mobile and active predators. The juveniles are orange-brown, wingless, mobile and active predators. At around 25°C, development from egg to adult takes several

weeks.

All life stages of the predator actively feed on thrips, but also on other pests such as spider mites, aphids, moth eggs, etc., as well as on pollen. Similar to its prey, *Orius laevigatus* prefers to stay on the flowers, especially when they are rich in pollen.