

## Bugs and Shrubs Buzz

by Doug Caldwell, "Dr. Dougbug"

### Marco Island Swarmed by Shore Midge Flies



Photo by Francisco Rodriguez,  
Biodiversidad Virtual

I have been getting numerous calls about small (less than 1/8" long) non-biting flies. It took a while, but we have a name for it, *Scatella tenuicosta*. Some info from Dr. Philip Kaufman UF/IFAS Entomology Dept.: "I doubt they are in the sand. Here is a site to look over: <http://cues.cfans.umn.edu/old/inter/inmine/Fliess.html> The article mentions that they are in the algae growing on the surface of potting soil (certainly not a natural developmental site). They seem to be a greenhouse pest (I have never dealt with them). My guess is that they developed to such high numbers as a result of some sort of algal growth on nearby ponds or ditches holding water. They seem, overall, to exploit a wide range of habitats, although likely species specific." We will be investigating what they may be reproducing in and try to couple its biohistory info so that their numbers may be reduced.

*Doug Caldwell is a landscape entomologist and works for the Cooperative Extension Service, which is an off-campus branch of the University of Florida, Institute of the Food and Agricultural Sciences and a Division of the Public Services Department of Collier County government. Call 239-252-4800. Extension programs are open to all persons without regard to race, color, creed, sex, handicap, or national origin. For updates on the Southwest Florida Horticultural Learning Center and more landscape pest management details, visit <http://collier.ifas.ufl.edu>*