

## SCALE INSECT

### **Description:**

Common Scale, Oyster Shell Scale, Eulecanium Scale and Mealy Scale.

### **Detection:**

Check the underside of your leaves and on the stem of the plant for oval, shell or thread-shaped insects. They spend most of their lives stationary on the plant. Protected by a waxy scale which varies in colour from white to brown. A severe infestation will have the appearance of lumpy blisters on the underside of the leaves and on the stem; this will eventually result in the yellowing of affected leaves or fronds and they will drop off. The insects also excrete a sticky honeydew which could attract a black sooty mould.

### **Control:**

Gently remove the scales from the leaves, fronds or stem with a small soft brush, (for tough plants an old toothbrush will suffice) then rinse the plant with clear tepid water containing a little liquid soap (approximately half a teaspoon per 4 litres). For heavy infestations, take the plant into a well-ventilated area, preferably outside and spray the plant with an insecticide that is approved for houseplants. When the spray has dried, rinse the plant with clear tepid water. Repeated applications may be necessary so check regularly for any signs of re-infestation. You can also use a cotton swab dipped in alcohol or methylated spirit, but test a small area first to check it doesn't damage the plant. Non edible plants can be sprayed or if potted drenched with Provado. If using a chemical control be very careful to follow label directions exactly.

There is also a biological control method for this pest.