

JRG

TERMITE & PEST CONTROL

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The Pest Bulletin

Bed Bugs are in the News

Who would have guessed that bed bugs would be back in the news! Whether in fancy hotels, health care facilities, dormitories, apartments, and homes, bed bug problems have been steadily increasing in recent years.

Most people have fortunately never seen a bed bug, and have heard about them only from that old bedtime nursery rhyme, "...don't let the bed bugs bite!" Up until the mid-1940's, bed bugs were a common and widespread pest in this country. At that time DDT and other



broad-spectrum, very long-lived pesticides came into use. These were used so widely against all kinds of pests, and were so effective against bed bugs, that bed

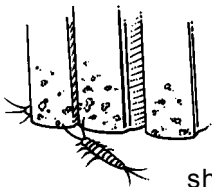
bug problems thankfully became a thing of the past—at least everyone thought.

The recent resurgence in bed bugs is caused by many factors. Increased international travel is resulting in more travelers often unknowingly bringing the pests here. Immigration is at an all-time high. And DDT and other long-

lived insecticides that used to be widely sprayed have since been discontinued.

It's anyone's guess how common bed bugs will eventually become in this country. These pests feed at night, leaving dark blood spots on bed sheeting. Unlike flea bites, which often are found around the ankles, bed bugs feed on any skin that is exposed while sleeping. Bed bug control requires a very thorough inspection and treatment, and a high level of cooperation with owners and occupants.

Silverfish: Hidden Pests



Silverfish are common problems in many homes and buildings. These pests eat irregular-shaped holes in paper products, especially books, magazines, and loose papers in undisturbed, warm (over 70°F) and humid places.

Silverfish especially like to eat the glue on book bindings, envelopes, stamps, paper labels, and wallpaper. They also eat holes in starched clothing and silk, and to a lesser extent they eat human food like flour and cereal, as well as high-protein foods like dried meats.

You may not see silverfish very often because they come out only at night. During the day they hide in dark, tight places. But you may see them during the day when you move papers or books that have been sitting

undisturbed for awhile, or where they've fallen into bathtubs, bowls, etc, and been unable to crawl out.

These pests are often unknowingly transported from one building to another in boxes, books, and newspapers. In apartments and homes they follow the pipelines between rooms.

Silverfish can take some dryness, but they really thrive and multiply where the humidity is high, or where they have access to moisture. Leaky roofs or plumbing, damp garages or basement floors, and poor caulking around sinks and tubs all provide the moisture they need.

If you have problems with these pests, reduce moisture sources and humidity, throw out any accumulated paper products you can, and call us for professional control.

Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

Weather-stripping does more than just keep out cold air—it can also reduce the number of pests coming in. Apply new (or replace old and brittle) weather-stripping around all exterior doors, including garage doors, as well as to any gaps around windows and other openings.



Watching Alfred Hitchcock on late night Pest Cable Network.

Insect Found to Damage Pipes



According to a recent report in *The Canadian Entomologist*, Western Conifer Seed Bugs aren't just a nuisance when they invade homes and other buildings in the fall and winter—they can actually puncture holes in certain kinds of plumbing pipes. This common invader has now spread across much of the United States and into Canada.

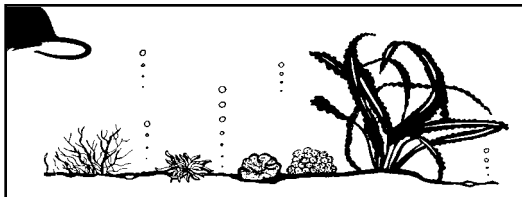
Laboratory tests confirmed what some people had suspected—that the bugs can use their unusually strong and sharp mouthparts to pierce plastic pipes, resulting in microscopic holes. PEX (cross-linked polyethylene) pipe, a component of some home plumbing and radiant heating systems, is most susceptible, but even PVC and CPVC pipes can be damaged, according to the tests.

Fugitive Rat Sets Swim Record

Scientists released a radio-tagged rat on an island off New Zealand, in an attempt to learn more about the movement of rats when they invade islands. But at the end of the project the rodent was too sly to be trapped. It finally turned up—but, incredibly, on another island 440 yards away!

The evasive rat had swum an amazing distance across the open ocean, setting a new record. This is now the longest distance recorded for a rat swimming across open sea. The rat was eventually killed in a trap baited with penguin meat.

Invasive species, especially rats, are a major cause of extinctions, second only to habitat loss. Rats prey on a wide variety of defenseless animals, especially birds, their chicks, and eggs. They also compete with native species for essential food.



Your Questions Answered

Q. Could I have rats or mice and not be aware of it? What are the signs to look for?

A. We usually receive calls from people after they've actually seen a mouse or rat, or seen some sign of feeding, or their droppings. By that time the pests may already have lived in your home for awhile and multiplied, or caused other damage that becomes apparent only later.

You should be aware of the many other signs of a rodent

infestation, including high excitement of cats and dogs probing a certain area of a floor or wall, squeaks and climbing sounds, nests or caches of food, tracks, burrows, and gnawed materials. Eventually rodents will also leave urine smells, signs of trails or runs, and smudge marks along pipes, wires, and beams where dirt and oil from their fur leaves a dark mark.



Can Mice Really Sing?



According to new findings by researchers at *Washington University School of Medicine*, mice can sing! Male mice produce high-frequency sounds when they smell the scent of a female mouse. Human ears can't hear these sounds, but the researchers recorded the mice and then used a computer program to drop the recordings several octaves and make them audible to our ears.

The sounds have a definite pattern to them—repeated variations of chirps or phrases—which qualifies them as songs, in the same way as whistling birds and even whales sing. However, the researchers note that the mouse songs are much simpler, lacking the sophistication of adult bird songs.

Pest Trivia

TEST YOURSELF AND FRIENDS WITH THESE!

1. Ants outnumber people. Can you guess by how much?
2. Can a mouse kill an elephant?
3. How many ears do those noisy crickets have—and where are those ears located on their bodies?
4. What is the coldest temperature an insect can survive?



ANSWERS TO PEST TRIVIA!

1. By some estimates, there are over one million ants for every man, woman, and child in the world.
2. Yes, if it runs up an elephant's trunk and blocks it, it can kill the elephant. (This really happened.)
3. Crickets have two organs that act as ears—one on each front leg.
4. Tougher than Superman, at least one insect can survive being submersed in *liquid helium*—that's minus 270° Centigrade! It's the larvae of an African chironomid fly. Submerge it for up to five minutes in liquid helium, and there's still a 100% survival rate!