



# PEST GUIDE

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## RACCOONS

Raccoons bend corn stalks down to eat the ears. They break open and scoop out watermelons. They can be devastating for poultry farmers and will occasionally attack family pets. **Raccoon Control** measures include keeping pet food put away inside a tightly closed metal container, securing garbage can lids, and erecting a 5- to 6-foot fence or a two-wire electric fence. Repellents may help temporarily. Live trapping in a wire cage trap is usually effective. Consult your local government animal control department for further information. If trapping raccoons, use caution. They may be cute but can be vicious with very sharp teeth and claws.



### Common Infectious Diseases of Raccoons

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Raccoons are susceptible to a large number of different infectious agents including bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Several of these infectious diseases are zoonotic. Veterinarians are faced with the diagnosis and treatment of wildlife including raccoons and need to be able to make the correct diagnosis as well as educate clients on the potential hazards associated with exposure to raccoons.

Leptospirosis is a common bacterial disease in raccoons caused by a number of different species of *Leptospira*. Transmission is thought to occur via urine contamination of feed and water. Other natural bacterial infections reported in raccoons are listeriosis, yersiniosis, pasteurellosis, and tularemia.

Viral diseases of raccoons include rabies, canine distemper, raccoon parvoviral enteritis, infectious canine hepatitis, and pseudorabies.

## CARPENTER ANTS

### What is a Carpenter Ant?

(1/4 to 1/2 inch long) Nesting in wet or water damaged wood they forage throughout the home looking for food crumbs or insects. Although they come in many colors the most important ones are black.

### Where You'll Find Carpenter Ants

The largest of the ant family they take their name from their ability of chewing passageways (or galleries) in wood. They live inside the wood leaving only to forage (mostly at night) for food. They will set up satellite colonies inside the home from their parent colonies outside in trees or landscape timber.



Carpenter ants love damp climates and moist areas – wet or water damaged wood, any dark place, and a few morsels of food. Areas that get a lot of rain are especially susceptible. So are homes built in heavily wooded areas or in low, shady places where the ground stays damp. In your home, you're likely to find carpenter ants nesting around a sink in the kitchen or bathroom.

Maybe even around plumbing leaks, clogged gutters and downspouts, behind shower walls where there is cracks where leaks can occur.

A clean house is no guarantee. When carpenter ants move in, the first thing they do is look for food. Unlike termites, carpenter ants do not eat wood. They search for syrup, honey, jelly, meat, fruit, grease, fat, and other domestic foods. If these favorites are not available in your home, the ants will feed on dead or living insects or any other type of organic matter.

Telltale Signs of Carpenter Ants



- Trails of workers around the kitchen, pantry, and other areas where food is stored
- Sawdust-like material that workers kick out of their nests during excavation
- Listen for ant sounds in the quiet of the night. When the ants are chewing, or simply moving around in the nest, they make a sound like rustling cellophane.

#### Nesting Sites of Carpenter Ants

- Dead limbs of living trees
- Under attic insulation.
- Hollow trees
- Roofs
- Interior wall voids
- Hollow core doors
- Under exterior siding
- Ceilings
- Supports in crawl space
- Exterior wall voids
- Stumps
- Wood pile
- Sill plates
- Between insulation and
- Roots of dead trees



**Carpenter ant extermination** requires long term care by a professional. Unfortunately they can travel several hundred yards, often coming from your neighbor's yard. Although we can not eliminate them from the outside we can maintain a barrier around your home to protect it. These ants can and will do harm to your home if left untreated and can cost thousands of dollars in damage.

**If you think you see any of these signs call us immediately**

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# SQUIRRELS

## Life style

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The grey squirrel is a common sight in local parks and gardens and because of its prolific breeding has to some extent led to the demise of the native red squirrel.

To breed, grey squirrels need a safe and secure site to build their nest, often called a drey, where they can escape predators, bear and raise their young, sleep overnight and escape inclement weather.

Usually the nest is constructed in a suitable tree, but other sites can be used.

One of the biggest problems occurs when a squirrel takes up residence in a domestic roof space, causing a great nuisance to the occupiers of the property.

It may use roof insulation for nesting material and may chew boxes and other items stored in the roof space.

In some instances they have been known to chew electric cables and roof joints causing a potentially dangerous situation as well as the problem of noise.

If squirrels are using a roof space for a nest, often the first reaction to the problem by the householder is to destroy them. This may not be the most successful solution to the problem.

For a successful long term solution it is essential to deny animals access to the roof space.

Before carrying out any works to prevent access to the roof space, it is essential that a thorough check is made to ensure that there are no young present in the nest.



Keeping the adult squirrel from their young will result in death for the young and substantial damage to the property where the mother tries to reach her young.

## **Breeding**

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Grey squirrels are capable of producing young twice a year between the months of February and September. If young are found in the nest, it will be necessary to wait until the young are taken foraging. Only when all the family is out should the access points be blocked.

## **Prevention**

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### Tips for **Squirrel Control**

Block any access points using chicken wire firmly fixed, or wedged into the access points

Repair damaged tiles, soffit or barge boarding.

Remove any overhanging branches or creepers that may be used to gain access to the roof. When removing the tree branches, ensure that the trees are not subject to a tree preservation order

Check your roof space periodically to ensure that any treatment is carried out at the earliest opportunity.

Grey squirrels are expert acrobats and climbers and will make ready use of nearby plants and trees for access to a nest site.

Grey squirrels are most active during mid morning and mid afternoon. Therefore any exclusion work should be carried out at these times, to ensure that the nest is empty.

## **Treatment**

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Scent repellents may be used with some success, but the unpleasant smell is not always recommended in loft spaces. If used as repellent on guttering and telephone wires, it will need replacing after rainfall.

Drey destruction and the use of poisonous baits are other methods of control if the environment is suitable for it.

## CAVE/CAMEL

### CRICKET/HOUSE CRICKET

#### Cave/Camel Cricket

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The Cave/Camel Cricket's hump-backed appearance when viewed from the side is where the name originates. They have jumping hind legs and long antennae like other crickets but they are wingless and so are unable to chirp. Color varies by species, ranging from light tan to brown, often having dark brown bands on some segments. Adults range from 0.5 to 1.5 inches in length. Camel crickets are usually associated with cool, damp, dark habitats. Since they are often found in caves, they are also commonly called cave crickets. Outdoors, they may be found under stones and logs and in other cool, damp habitats with suitable amounts of organic matter, which they use for food.



Like other crickets, camel crickets will invade buildings in the fall seeking suitable places to pass the winter. In these cases, they often remain in basements or crawl spaces and seldom damage items in the home. They are usually considered a nuisance only by virtue of their presence.

#### House Cricket

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Adult house crickets are 3/4-1 inch long, light yellowish-brown with 3 dark bands on the head. They will eat almost anything, often causing damage to woolens and silk. Crickets are nocturnal, hiding during the daytime but becoming active and vocal during the night. The "song" or chirping sound of the house cricket is welcome anywhere except in homes where the constant night time (and daytime) chirping keeps humans from getting sleep.

Crickets can be found in basements, crawlspaces, kitchens, fireplaces, behind appliances, behind baseboards and other cracks, crevices and wall voids. It is in these voids that a professional pest control Specialist Will Spray.

### **Cricket Control**

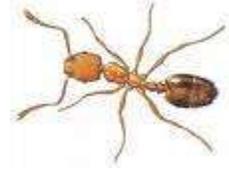
To prevent more crickets from invading your home, Our Specialists will spray the exterior of the structure with a long term insecticide.

# PHARAOH ANTS / ODOROUS ANTS

## Pharaoh Ants

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Pharaoh ants are a lot more difficult to control than other types. It also takes a completely different approach. Positive identification is the most important part of control for this ant. It is known for easily dividing into many smaller colonies throughout the structure if treated with anything other than a bait product. Baiting is the only way to gain control and this may take months even with a dedicated effort.



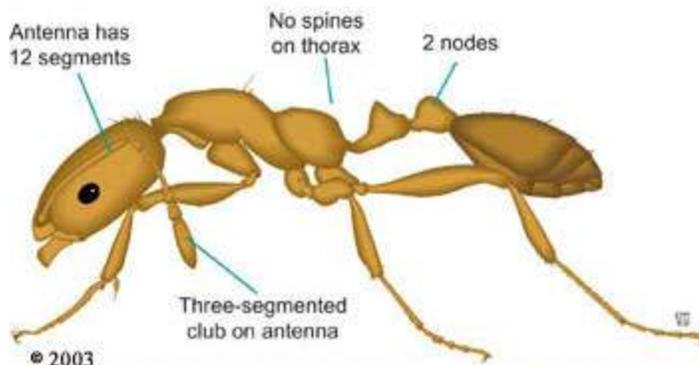
Colonies range in size from thousands to several hundred thousands of members. Each established colony will contain several hundred reproductive females as well as workers and queens. New colonies are formed through a budding process with as few as 5 workers, 10 pre adults, and 1 queen. As you can tell it does not take much for a new colony to form if the right group of members are broken off from the regular pheromone trails leading to the primary colony. Only about 10% of the workers are out foraging at a time.

They are a tremendous problem in multi unit/floor structures such as apartment complexes, hospitals, prisons, and homes. Their preferred nesting sites are in warm secluded areas in walls, sub floors, electrical and switch plate boxes, cracks, gaps, holes, or similar areas. They commonly use electrical and phone lines as a path to travel within a structure.

They prefer meats and greases and will eat dead or live insects. Other food choices include items containing sugar such as syrup, fruit juices, jellies, and cakes. In hospitals they can be a real nuisance due to the habit of infesting patients wounds, surgical suites and feeding on newborn infant secretions and IV tubes. For trail and nest areas look near water sources including sink and drain areas even potted plants.

### Pharaoh/Odorou Ant Control

Control of this ant differs from other ants. Baits are the only method of control. Do not under any circumstances use any spray or liquid residual materials. If a residual is used it will divide up the colony into many smaller colonies throughout the structure.



The Pharaoh ant is most often confused with the Thief ant. The primary difference between the two species is the Pharaoh ant has a three-segmented antennal club while the Thief ant has a two-segmented antennal club.

## Odorous House Ant

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The odorous house ant is found throughout North America and is a common house-infesting pest in Virginia. This pest is often found foraging for food in long trails over household surfaces and can contaminate food products. Although these ants do not bite or sting, they are a persistent nuisance pest once they begin foraging indoors in large numbers.

Odorous house ants are tiny, about 3 mm in length, and are dark brown to black in color. They can be taxonomically identified by having a single node on the petiole that is hidden from above by the abdomen. However, odorous house ants are most easily identified by the coconut odor that is produced when their bodies are crushed. It is from this odor that they get their name, odorous house ants.

These ants are almost always seen foraging in large numbers. When alarmed, the workers will run about in an erratic fashion with their abdomens raised in the air.

### Life Cycle

Like all ants, odorous house ants live in social colonies. These colonies are made up of different cast members (workers and reproductives). Male and female reproductives are often called winged swarmers.\* Swarmers first appear in the early summer months. Male swarmers will emerge from the parent colony first, followed by the new queens. A few days after mating, males usually die and the mated females begin new colonies. When a new colony is initiated, a queen lays a small batch of eggs and

tends the larvae that hatch. The adults that develop become workers and take over colony labor activities. Once a colony has been established, queens will continue egg laying until late fall. During the winter months adults are inactive and the larvae slow their development. In the spring, workers begin to forage and queens resume their egg laying. Larval development and production increases so the colony can grow substantially during spring and summer. Colonies can be very large, ranging in size from several hundred to over 100,000 individuals. In addition, odorous house ant colonies can produce hundreds of laying queens and thousands of workers.

\*Ant swarmers are sometimes misidentified as termite swarmers. Ants can be identified by having the front wings larger than the hind wings. Wings on termites, however, are considerably longer than the body and both wings are the same size.

### **Behavior**

Odorous house ants are very opportunistic and can nest in many different places both indoors and out. Outdoors, odorous house ant nests are usually shallow and may be found just underneath the soil surface. These nests may be found in mulch, soil, debris, logs, stumps, under stones and under plastic outdoor tarps. Indoors, nests are usually found in wall voids, around hot-water pipes and heaters, behind paneling, under carpets or beneath the floor. Sometimes these colonies can become so large that they eventually bud. Budding is a process by which the parent colony splits to form satellite colonies. The satellite colonies remain inner-connected to the parent colony by foraging trails. These trails provide for the exchange of workers, food, and larvae.

Odorous house ants forage both night and day and eat many types of foods. They eat live and dead insects but are also very attracted to sweet foods. They especially like the honeydew that is produced by aphids and mealybugs. Many colonies of odorous house ants tend or herd aphids and mealybugs to collect the honeydew they excrete.

## FLEA AND TICKS

- Fleas can reproduce rapidly at room temperature, making your home an ideal year-round environment. Fleas require blood to survive and reproduce, in the absence of a pet, humans become the flea's blood meal.
- Fleas are naturally protected from pesticides during various states of their life cycle. Most pesticides only kill fleas in their larva and adult stages, leaving the unhatched eggs and pupae to survive, develop and reproduce again.
- Fleas live on the outside of the body and need to feed on the blood of these animals in order to produce eggs. Because fleas usually feed and lay their eggs while the pet is sleeping, the pet's resting areas are where the most fleas will be found.



### Tick Control Tips:

Ticks are notoriously difficult to control in and around homes. Repeated treatments are often required to finally eliminate the ticks. In some cases where wildlife may be continuing to reintroduce ticks to a yard, continued tick control services may be necessary.

### Cat Fleas

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Cat Fleas with their flat shape they can easily pass between the hairs of animals. The cat flea is the species involved in most home infestations and will attack both cats and dogs as well as other wildlife.

**Size:** Tiny insects measuring about 1/6-inch in length and are laterally flattened.

**Color:** Reddish brown.

- Large populations can build up quickly, one female flea can lay about 18 eggs a day. That means just 20 fleas on a dog can produce 360 eggs per day and over 2000 eggs in a week.
- After the home is treated, it may take up to two weeks or more before fleas are no longer seen.



### Brown dog ticks

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Brown Dog Ticks do not confine themselves to dogs and will attach themselves to other animals and people. A female tick will lay eggs and after a few weeks, hundreds of young ticks, called larvae, may be

seen crawling about in search of a host. Larval ticks and adults are capable of surviving long periods, up to eight months without feeding.

**Size:** May reach 1/4-inch in length. After taking a blood meal, however, the female can measure about 1/2-inch or larger.

**Color:** Uniformly dark reddish brown with no markings.

- Typically found in heavy vegetation and tall grasses where dogs and other animals have been active.
- Found around shrubs and in landscaped areas, but will also be found in dog houses and kennels and beneath decks.

# MOTHS

## Key features

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The adult has a body length of between 6 and 8 mm and a wingspan of 9 and 16 mm. The upper side of the fore wings is buff, nearly golden, in colour. Both pairs of wings have fringed margins. Adults are rarely seen in flight, mostly only the males, and the females after they have deposited their eggs. The larva yellowish white in colour with a brown head and measures around 10 mm in length when fully mature.



## Biology

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The adult female lays eggs, between 50 and 100, amongst the material upon which the larvae will feed. The larva emerges from the egg and proceeds to feed. Whilst feeding the larva of the clothes moth frequently constructs a loose silken 'shelter' which has attached to its many particles of debris and faecal pellets etc. Once mature the larva pupates. The pupa is reddish brown in colour. There is a certain amount of mobility in the abdomen of the pupa and it twitches if disturbed. The adult emerges from the pupal case. Adult moths live for around 2 - 3 weeks.

In common with other insects, development times are influenced temperature, relative humidity, moisture content, quantity and quality of food. Total life cycle at 23.5°C and 50% relative humidity is takes 63 days.

## Distribution

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Worldwide.

## Significance

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The clothes moth is a significant pest, the larvae feeding on a wide variety of material of animal origin such as woolens, furs etc. Damage from larval feeding can be severe and the larvae are often difficult to detect as

they shun the light. Outdoors, adults are on the wing from May to September. Indoors, adults are found all year round.

## Control

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**Moth control** treatments consist of tracing the source of infestation, removing and destroying any infested foodstuffs and then applying a residual insecticide to infested areas. Care should be taken to select a non-staining insecticide if soft furnishings are to be treated. Additionally, an ultra-low volume application of insecticide would prove effective. The use of monitoring traps specific for the species will aid in determining the level of infestation.

Whilst there is no difficulty in controlling these moths, it is essential that a thorough treatment be carried out and that every possible larva development site is treated. They may be found in association with birds' and mammals' nests, therefore these possibilities should be checked when tracing the source of the infestation.

# SILVERFISH AND FIREBRATS

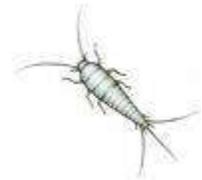
## Silverfish

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### Life Cycle and Habits:

Silverfish are active at night and hide during the day. When objects are moved where they are hiding, they dart out and seek new hiding places. The silverfish lives and develops in damp, cool places (prefers 75 to 95 percent relative humidity), often in the basement, bathroom and kitchen. Large numbers may be found in new buildings where the walls are still damp from plaster and green lumber.

The Silverfish is quick moving and lives in dark places above 90 degrees F° such as around ovens, furnaces, boiler rooms and fireplaces or insulation around hot water and heat pipes. These insects follow pipelines from the basement to rooms on lower floors, living in bookcases, around closet shelves, behind baseboards and behind window or door frames. They are hardy and can live without food for many months. Bristletails prefer to eat vegetable matter. Indoors, they will feed on rolled oats, dried beef, flour, starch, paper and paper sizing (which contains starch), gum and cereals. Outdoors, they can be found under rocks, bark and leaf mold, and in ant, termite, bird and animal nests.



Silverfish females may lay over 100 eggs during a lifetime. Eggs are laid singly or two to three at a time in small groups, hatching in three to six weeks. Young silverfish resemble adults except being smaller, white and take on the adult color in four to six weeks. Adults may live two to eight years. Silverfish lay about 50 eggs at one time in several batches. Eggs hatch in about two weeks under ideal conditions.

Silverfish depending on the species, may reach maturity in three to twenty-four months. These insects normally hitchhike into the home in food, furniture, old books, papers and old starched clothing. Unlike other insects, they continue to molt after becoming adults. Forty-one molts have been recorded for one Silverfish. Populations do not build up fast. A large infestation in the house usually indicates a longtime infestation.

### Silverfish Extermination Measures:

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