

URBAN PEST NEWS

March 2005

Agent Notes

Thank you to everyone who participated in the IPM program last year. I will be continuing the newsletter, but I will not be providing quarterly trainings. If you need a specific training or a CEU credit, call me to schedule a class. CEU classes require at least 30 days notice so I can turn the proper paperwork into the SPCB. You can reach me at 512-854-9600.

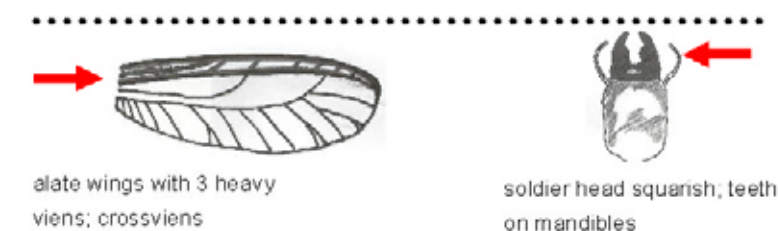
Identifying Termites

Termite season is near. Be sure you can properly identify swarmers and soldiers!



Subterranean Termite

Formosan Termite



Drywood Termite

Stored Product Pest Tips for Your Customers

- Do not buy broken or damaged products
- Vacuum food debris from cracks on pantry shelves
- Try to use food within 2 to 4 months
- Store pet food and birdseed in sealed plastic, metal or glass containers
- Use heat or cold to treat food items
 - Place in oven at 130 degrees for one hour
 - Place in freezer for one to two weeks



Stored Product Pests

There are numerous insects that infest stored products; they are typically brought into the home by infested products.

Cigarette and drugstore beetles feed on plant materials including flour, spices, seeds, nuts, tobacco, grains, potpourri and dried flowers. They are small, brown to reddish-brown in color, with a rounded profile and their head deflected under the body.



Indian meal moths can be found in dogfood, birdseed, cereals, dried fruit, nuts, powdered milk and candy. Adults are small with grayish wings tipped with copper. Larvae often crawl along pantry walls. Pupae are often found along corners of wall areas.



Rice and granary weevils infest whole grain or processed grain foods. Weevils differ from other beetles by their snout (similar to an elephant's trunk). Rice and granary weevils are small, cylindrical in shape and brown to black in color; rice weevils have four pale markings on their back.



Flour beetles are small, reddish-brown with elongated bodies. They feed on cereals, beans, milled grains such as flour, nuts, chocolate and dried milk. Generally food products infested with flour beetles have a foul odor and taste.

To eliminate a pantry pest problem, locate and remove all infested items. Removing infested items is the easy part; finding the infestation is not always so simple. Begin with the oldest food items, usually in the back. Inspect unopened food items since these can also be a source. Check everything! If you find an infested item, do not stop your inspection, more than one item may be infested.



It is extremely important to find the source, and not all pantry pest infestations come from the pantry. Check rooms for items such as dried, decorative peppers, dried flowers, potpourri or rice heating packs.

Honey Bees



With the colonization of Africanized, or “killer” bees, in Texas most people do not welcome bee colonies around their home. There is always the possibility of a person or pet being stung regardless if the bee is Africanized or not.

There are different situations when people may encounter bees around their home. Foraging bees, out searching for food, are not likely to sting since they are away from the colony and do not have to defend it.

Bee swarms can be a common sight in the spring. Swarms are produced as a part of the colony’s reproductive process. Established colonies produce a new queen, causing the old queen and about half the worker bees to leave the colony to search for a new nest location. Swarming honey bees are usually gentle unlikely to sting.

Swarms often cluster on objects around the home- a mailbox, bush, fence or tree limb. Swarms may stay in the same location from a couple of hours to a couple of days. Scout bees are sent out from the swarm to search for a nesting site. Even though bees will usually move, if they are unwanted around the structure, it is best to eliminate them.

Honey bee colonies can also be found around homes. Colonies are established by swarming bees. After selecting an appropriate site, bees begin to build comb to store food and rear young. When about four weeks have passed, bees become defensive of the nest and are more likely to sting when disturbed.

Honey bee colonies are often found in wall voids, chimneys or attics. If bees are within a wall void, DO NOT block their entrance, this will only make them search for another way to exit and might lead the bees into the structure.

Once honey bees move into a building, they should be removed as soon as possible. After a colony has been in place over three weeks, the wall should be opened to remove the honey and comb.

Secondary insect pests such as cockroaches, wax moths or beetles can become a problem if the comb is not removed. It is possible for the comb to melt once bees are no longer tending it, allowing honey to seep into sheetrock, causing walls to become stained. Walls should be opened within two weeks of treatment, or after all flight activity has stopped.

To keep bees from re-entering a home, seal any holes found in walls where pipes enter the home, cracks in window framing, knotholes, weep holes, or cracks between wood and brick junctures.

Protect yourself! Wear protective clothing when working with bees.



For more information contact:

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Happy St. Patrick's Day!



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