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## EC1565 Cockroaches or Waterbugs

Robert W. Helm

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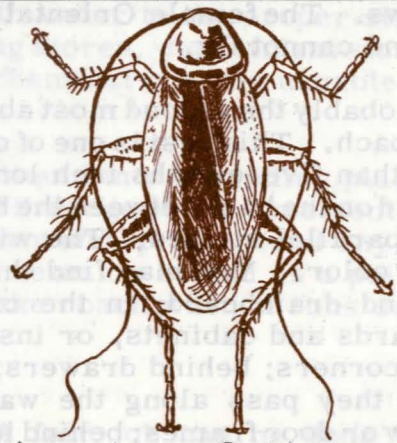
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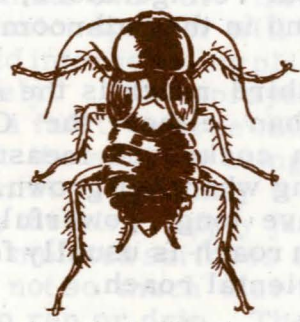
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# Cockroaches or Waterbugs



American Cockroach



Oriental Cockroach  
or Waterbug



German Cockroach

EXTENSION SERVICE  
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE  
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
COOPERATING  
W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR



# Cockroaches or Waterbugs

Robert W. Helm, Extension Entomologist

Three kinds of cockroaches are common household pests in Nebraska. Most abundant is the Oriental cockroach, the pest that many Nebraska home owners call the "waterbug". This roach is entirely black, or deep brownish black. It grows to about one and one-fourth inches in length and is rather sluggish in its movements. It thrives best in very damp places, such as cellars, drain pipes, near the sink, behind radiators and under the trim of doors and windows. The female Oriental cockroach is almost wingless and cannot fly.

Probably the second most abundant roach is the German cockroach. This pest is one of our smallest roaches, never more than five-eighths inch long. It is light brown and is marked on the back between the head and the wings with two dark, parallel stripes. The wings are of a uniform light-brown color. You may find this roach around the kitchen sink and drainboard; in the cracks around or underneath cupboards and cabinets, or inside them, especially in the upper corners; behind drawers; around pipes or conduits, where they pass along the wall or go through it; behind window or door frames; behind loose baseboards or molding strips; inside the compartment containing the motor of mechanical refrigerators; on the under side of tables and chairs; and in the bathroom.

The third roach is the American cockroach, which is larger than either the Oriental or the German. The American cockroach measures one and one-half to two inches long when full grown. It is light brown. All of the adults have long, powerful, reddish-brown wings. The American roach is usually found in the same type of place as the Oriental roach.

Cockroaches usually hide during the day in sheltered, darkened places. They roam around at night after all the lights are out. Roaches destroy food and damage fabrics, book bindings and other material. They spread filth and pollute food when they run over it. If you disturb them at night by turning on a light, they will run rapidly for shelter

and disappear through holes in wall plaster, down along water or steam pipes and through similar openings. If you know where they hide, you will be able to control them much better.

There are many ways to kill roaches but probably the best way is to use a 2% chlordane spray. There are several commercial preparations of this chlordane chemical on the market in the 2% strength that are effective when used correctly. Home owners with heavy infestations or business establishments with large areas that need treatment can also obtain bulk chlordane in stronger concentrations. This material can be diluted with water to the proper strength. Most of the seed stores, drug stores, department stores and grocery stores handle this chemical in some usable form.

If possible, spray the liquid into the hiding places already mentioned and around the edge of the basement floor. Spray the pipes in the basement and spray around any drainage holes. This chemical remains behind as a poisonous residue and is picked up by the roach when it runs over the treated surfaces.



A fair job can be done with a hand-type sprayer or a paint brush, but a small two- or three-gallon compression sprayer will introduce the liquid into the hiding places more effectively. The sprayer should deliver a fairly coarse mist, which will wet the surface being treated. If the mist is too fine, it will float away in the air. Apply just enough spray to moisten surfaces thoroughly, but not so much that the liquid begins to run or drip. The average

home owner will find many other uses for a compression sprayer, such as combating flies, mosquitoes, and general garden insects.

Chlordane can also be used as a 5% dust or powder in places where liquid sprays would be objectionable. Blow



the powder into hiding places or onto surfaces where roaches run. A light, uniform film is sufficient. Repeat when excessive moisture cause the powder to cake and become useless.

## CAUTION

Chlordane is mildly poisonous and should be used with care around food storage areas or play areas where children or pets might come in prolonged contact with it. The concentrated chemical formulations should be kept in a locked place when not in use. Package directions should be followed carefully.

