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EC57-1577 Control Household Insects

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Control Household Insects

Robert E. Roselle

ANTS

Most household ants are primarily nuisance pests; however, the carpenter ant (large black ant) is capable of damaging wood, especially soft woods or woods that have started to decay.



To control ants use a coarse spray or apply insecticide with a paint brush where ants enter the home, and along the lines of travel. It is very important to locate the source of entry, or the nest outside the home and treat them thoroughly. Use 2% chlordane, 0.5% lindane or 0.5% dieldrin household spray solutions.

BED BUGS

Bed bugs are small, flat, reddish brown insects which are wingless and produce a disagreeable odor when crushed. They hide during the day, sucking blood at night.

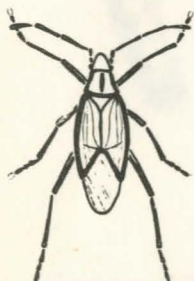
Control with 5% DDT, or 2% chlordane sprays. Apply spray to mattress seams, springs, bed frame and legs. Sprays should also be applied to cracks in walls, behind baseboards or other hiding places in infested rooms.



BOX ELDER BUGS

Box elder bugs cause no important damage in the home, but are nuisances especially in the fall, winter and early spring.

They feed and develop on several kinds of trees, shrubs, and grasses outside the home during the summer, migrating into buildings during cool weather. They are difficult to control.



Control with 5% chlordane sprays made by mixing 1 part of 45% chlordane emulsion concentrate with 10 parts of water. Spray on bugs when they "bunch-up" outside foundations, also apply liberally along the outside foundation. Sprays applied to bugs during the summer will help reduce numbers that will migrate in the fall.

Inside the home, use a 2% chlordane household spray directly on the bugs. Large numbers can be picked up with a vacuum sweeper.

CARPET BEETLES

In Nebraska, carpet beetles are the most important destroyers of stored woolen clothing, wool carpets and other fabrics. They also feed on cereal products, dried fruits, seeds, feathers, and many other materials. Most damage attributed to clothes moths is actually done by carpet beetles. Feeding is generally done in dark corners, under furniture, or in storage closets. The larvae can live on lint in floor cracks and behind baseboards. They are very difficult to eradicate.

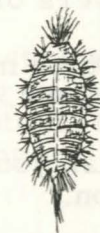
Control with 2% chlordane, 0.5% lindane, or 0.5% dieldrin sprays, 5% chlordane or 1% lindane dusts.

Treat carpets by spraying the backs with one of the recommended spray solutions, or dust under the rugs with one of the dusts. If children or pets are not present a dust may be worked into the infested areas from the upper surface, but general dusting of rugs is not recommended. At the same time spray or dust all cracks in the floor, behind baseboards and in closets.

Infested clothing should be dry cleaned, as this will kill all stages of carpet beetles. Clothing being stored can be sprayed with moth proofing sprays or aerosols made for this purpose. Do not use other formulations as some may leave stains. Treat all infested closets, trunks, drawers, and boxes with one of the sprays.

When storing woolens be certain they are clean, store in a clean container with one pound of paradichlorobenzene (PDB) for each 100 cubic feet of space. Containers must be very tight to prevent infestations. Most moth cakes may leave a clean odor, but do little, if anything, to control carpet beetles.

Stubborn infestations may require the services of a commercial pest control operator.



Larva



Adult

CLOTHES MOTHS

There are two kinds of clothes moths--the webbing, and the case making. Damage caused by both is the same. The webbing clothes moth larva spins a web tunnel wherever it goes, the case making larva makes a cocoon-like case from which it feeds. Small moths flying to lights in the home are probably not clothes moth adults, as adult clothes moths avoid bright lights.

Control as for carpet beetles. Washable woolens can be protected with EQ-53. This is a DDT product that can be mixed with rinse water in a washing machine. Follow package directions carefully.



CLOVER MITES

Clover mites are reddish in color and smaller than a pin head. They feed on grass, clover, and many other plants. In the fall, on warm winter days, and in the spring they crawl into homes in large numbers. They cause no damage and are not known to bite humans, but are nuisances.

Inside the home, spray mites with a household insecticide containing pyrethrum or allethrin. Place pyrethrum powder in window sills.



Sweep up mites with a vacuum sweeper. Repeat controls as migrations continue.

Outside the home use 57% malathion emulsion concentrate at the rate of 1/2 pint per 50 linear feet around the infested areas of buildings. Malathion must be applied in large volumes of water to be effective. Apply to the sides of the house, basement walls, and lawn area to eight feet from the basement. In order to obtain the necessary volume of water, either power sprayers or spray attachments for garden hoses should be used.

Other mite killers such as dimite, aramite and others may be used according to package directions.

Ask your county agent for Extension Circular 1570, "Clover Mites", for detailed information.



HOUSE CENTIPEDES

The house centipede is not poisonous to humans, but often is undesirable because of its appearance. They feed on insects, so do no harm to or in the home.

Control with any household spray solution applied directly to the centipede. Normally they never occur in large numbers, so a fly swatter will usually suffice.

COCKROACHES

There are four kinds of cockroaches (waterbugs) which are common household pests in Nebraska; German, Oriental, American, and brown banded.

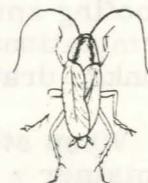
Most infestations are found in kitchens, bathrooms or basements. The brown banded may be found in any room in the home; living behind pictures, in television sets, radios, or furniture.

Roaches damage fabrics and other materials as well as destroy food. They leave filth and may spread bacteria when allowed to run over food.

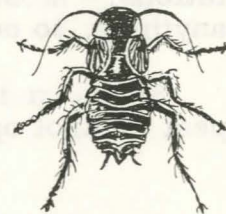
Control first involves sanitation to prevent infestations. A home free from available food supply, clean, and inspected often is less likely to develop roach infestations. Clean up all spilled foods, remove hiding places, and inspect produce brought into the kitchen carefully. These are a few means of prevention.

Residual sprays of 2% chlordane, 0.5% dieldrin or 0.5% lindane applied as a coarse spray or with a paint brush are suggested. Make applications where roaches usually hide. These areas can be found by switching on a light at night, then watching where they hide. A few common hiding places are under kitchen drawers, in kitchen cabinets, under sinks, behind baseboards, under stoves and refrigerators, and in cracks. In basements they generally hide behind or under boxes, shelves or any dark area.

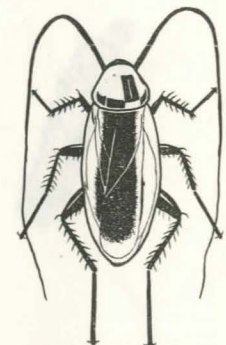
Some roaches in Nebraska have become resistant to the above insecticides, in which case use 0.5% deodorized malathion. Many difficult cases can only be controlled by a pest control operator.



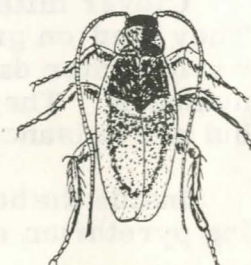
German



Oriental



American



Brown
Banded

CRICKETS

Crickets are usually more commonly found invading homes in the fall, as they seek warmth from cool outside temperatures. They damage fabrics and may chew on books or other items, especially in basements.



Inside homes, control with 2% chlordane or 5% DDT sprays, 5% chlordane dust or 10% DDT dust. Make applications along walls, under boxes, in dark areas or other hiding places. Spray outside basement walls and lightly into the lawn with 5% chlordane as for box elder bugs.

Crickets will often feed on stored vegetables, perennial flower bulbs and roots. Keep these items on benches or tables off basement floor.

FLEAS

Fleas generally feed on dogs, cats, rats, and other animals; however, they may become numerous in buildings or lawns and be important pests of humans.

In lawns, spray with 3 tablespoons 50% wettable DDT powder or dust with 5% chlordane or 10% DDT dust. Treat bedding of dogs also.



In buildings use one of the dusts mentioned above on floors.

On dogs use 10% DDT powder dusted into the fur. On cats use rotenone or pyrethrum powders. DO NOT use DDT or chlordane on cats as they are subject to poisoning by these materials.

HOUSEFLIES

Houseflies breed in all kinds of decaying organic matter, especially moist manures. The most important step in control is to eliminate all breeding sources. Spread manures, spade grass clippings into gardens, cover garbage and dispose of at least twice weekly. Treat compost piles with 4% malathion dust.



Screen all openings in the home, and use self closing devices on all doors.

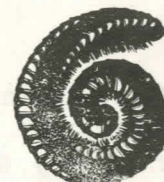
In homes use swatters and aerosol bombs containing pyrethrum or allethrin in combination with methoxychlor.

In barns use a poison sweet bait containing 2% malathion or dip-terex, or a residual spray of malathion and syrup or sugar. To prepare malathion residual sprays use 6 gallons of water, 1 pint of 57% malathion emulsion concentrate, and 3 cups of sugar or 1 pint of syrup. Spray walls and floor to cover thoroughly but lightly.

MILLIPEDES

Millipedes, commonly called thousand legged worms, do no harm in the home with the possible exception of feeding on stored vegetables. They often enter basements in large numbers during the fall.

Migrations can be reduced by applications of chlordane outside the



basement walls as for box elder bugs. Inside basements they are difficult to kill. Direct applications of 2% chlordane household sprays are effective, but require much time. Poison baits made by dusting slices of raw potatoes or apples with Paris green will kill them. **BAITS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED IF CHILDREN OR PETS ARE PRESENT IN THE HOME.**

MOSQUITOES

The first step in mosquito control is to eliminate breeding places such as standing water, tin cans, automobile tires, barrels and other items that will catch and hold rain water. Ornamental pools should be stocked with mosquito feeding minnows, or treated with pyrethrum when mosquito larvae are present.



Spray shrubbery around the home with DDT using 1 cup of 50% wettable powder to 1 gallon of water.

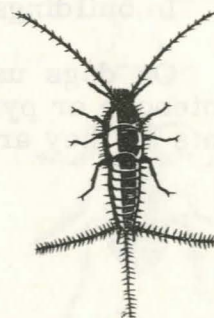
In homes use a pyrethrum aerosol and make certain that screens are in good repair.

Several good repellents such as 612 are on the market. These are available as liquids, sticks, and on tissue paper. Rub exposed body areas with a repellent when exposed to areas harboring numerous mosquitoes.

SILVERFISH

Silverfish prefer warm, moist areas which are dark most of the day. They feed on wall paper, book bindings, clothing, rayon curtains and other starchy materials.

Airing and drying of dark, damp rooms will help prevent damaging populations. Make residual applications of 2% chlordane or 5% DDT household sprays using a coarse spray or paint brush, or use 5% chlordane or 10% DDT powders.



SPIDERS

Most spiders are only nuisances. The common household spiders feed on insects. When webs or the presence of spiders are objectionable apply sprays as for cockroaches. Residual sprays are not too effective, so make direct application whenever possible.



With one exception spiders are not dangerous to humans in Nebraska. The one exception is the black widow spider shown in the illustration. This spider may inflict a very painful and dangerous bite, but it is not aggressive. It is usually associated with drought conditions.

The black widow is shiny black, presenting an enamel or shoe button appearance. It has a bright red hour-glass spot on the underside of the body.

TERMITES

Several insecticides can be used as chemical barriers in soil around homes. Keep all wood from direct contact with the soil. Ask your county agent for a copy of Nebraska Extension Circular 1558



"Termite Control in Nebraska" to obtain detailed information about prevention and control of termites. Serious infestations may require the services of a commercial termite control expert.

WASPS

Wasps often construct paper-like nests under eaves and in garages. They do not damage buildings, but often are aggressive and attack with painful stings.



Control with 2% chlordane or 5% DDT spray solutions which contain pyrethrum or allethrin. Apply to nest late at night when wasps are quiet. If all wasps are killed the next day, tear down nests. If a few remain, spray again the next night.

If nests are built in shrubbery use a 5% chlordane or 10% DDT dust in the same manner. Oil solutions will injure living plants.

CEREAL PESTS

Saw-toothed grain beetles, and confused flour beetles are common pests of flour, meal, cereal products and dried fruits. They are small, reddish colored beetles.

Destroy infested products, or kill insects by heating in an oven for 30 minutes at 150 degrees F.

Remove all foods, dishes, and other articles from the pantry or cupboards, clean thoroughly then spray with a 5% DDT household spray solution. After spray has dried completely the foods and dishes may be replaced.

Infestations may occur from insects flying into the home, or from infested food brought from grocery stores. It is necessary to store all cereal foods and dried fruits in tight containers with screw tops to prevent infestations from starting or spreading.

Bits of food remaining in paper containers for weeks are the most common source of trouble. These should be used or discarded rather than forgotten.



Saw-toothed



Confused
flour
beetle

INSECTS ATTRACTED TO LIGHTS

Many kinds of insects, especially "millers" are attracted to lights at night. They often occur in such large numbers they present a serious nuisance.

Tight fitting screens in good repair will help keep them out of homes. Applications of 5% DDT to screens will help kill some of the smaller night flying insects.

Yellow lights are not as attractive to most insects as white or blue lights. Yellow bulbs may be used near windows or outside doors.

Often a bright light in one corner of the yard will attract insects away from outdoor living areas.

"Millers" in the house can be caught in a pan of soapy water held or placed about 6 inches under a bright light.

CAUTION

Insecticides are poisons and must be handled as such. A few essential precautions which will help avoid accidents are:

1. ALWAYS store insecticides out of reach of children. They should be locked in a box and stored on a high shelf.
2. Never make excessive applications in the home. Use coarse sprays or apply with a brush to areas infested.
3. Avoid excessive contact with insecticides. A few individuals are allergic to oils or chemicals, which may cause skin rashes.
4. If insecticide is spilled on hands, wash immediately with soap and water. If spilled on clothing, bathe and change immediately.
5. NEVER store insecticides in unmarked containers.
6. In case of accidental poisoning, call a doctor immediately, or rush patient to a hospital. Antidotes are on the labels, read them before using.
7. Follow label precautions very carefully.
8. If not sure about use, ask someone first.