
MEET **THE** **BUGS**



**FALL PESTS OF MASSACHUSETTS AND HOW TO
KEEP THEM OUT OF YOUR HOME**

From the Desk of Zack Ciras of Colonial Pest Control:

Bugs are everywhere, and there are literally hundreds of thousands of different types of insects throughout the states of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. However, their prevalence doesn't give homeowners peace of mind, because these pests are a complete nuisance, especially when they invade your yard and home.

My hope is that with this eBook, you will not only learn more about how to identify some of the most common insects in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, but also discover ways to get rid of them naturally and how you can prevent pests out of your living space for good.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my knowledge of insects and pests with you, and I hope you enjoy reading about ways to keep your home and yard pest free.

Sincerely,

Zack

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Introduction

Bugs both large and small invade our homes every day, and it can feel like a constant battle to keep unwanted pests at bay. From wasps and stink bugs to Asian beetles, there are no shortage of annoying bugs in Massachusetts that attempt to make our homes their own. Correctly identifying these bugs is key to understanding how they operate and how to get rid of them.

This eBook will give you more information about some of the common types of insects that Massachusetts home and business owners have to deal with on a daily basis. You'll learn how to spot these bugs and what to do in the event that you're dealing with an infestation of these insects in your home or yard.

Keep reading to find out more about how to get rid of spiders, what a Western Conifer Seed Bug is and why you need to be concerned about it, and how to get rid of wasps in your home and yard naturally.

Stink Bugs

Stink Bugs, or, rather, Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs, are an increasing nuisance in the Northeast. In their native lands throughout East Asia, they have been more than a nuisance for some time. They are a major crop pest there.



Stink Bug Facts

First identified in the Mid-Atlantic in the 90s, the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug is a leaf bug, identified as about 1/2 inch long with marbled brown wings and a dark area where the wings overlap at the rear. Oh yeah, and they Stink! The unpleasant odor is emitted when the bug feels threatened or is crushed.

How to Get Rid of Stink Bugs

Stink Bugs are little more than a nuisance in a home, but the odor can build up. If you see these stinkers crawling about, don't squash them, or you will be met with the smell. Vacuuming the insects may also release the odor, so that is not promoted unless you plan on discarding the hose and the container.

Instead, gently grab them with a tissue, use insecticide and sweep them up, or better yet, attract them with

an insect light to land on an easily disposable insect glue trap. Of course, the best control is to keep them out in the first place. Sealing cracks and gaps at the exterior with caulking will go a long way. A late August or fall chemical barrier application will also assist in lessening the creatures coming inside throughout the winter.

Asian Lady Bugs

Ladybug, ladybug, fly away home!

Some things, such as nursery rhymes and the multicolored Asian Ladybeetle aren't so cute once you really get to know them.

What Are Asian Lady Bugs?

Ladybugs are largely a beneficial insect. They were brought over from Asia to control aphid population on garden plants, but these poetic favorites can be a nuisance inside homes. They congregate in corners of rooms, excreting foul smells and leaving nasty little stains. Their aim is to get through winter in voids, only to emerge in the spring and go about their business.



Preventing an Asian Lady Bug Infestation

In the meantime, they do no real harm, but can be rather irritating. Vacuuming the insects may be a help, but keep in mind the stench may build up. Physical barrier exclusion is really the way to go here. Caulk around gaps, install screens with tight mesh at vents and windows, and ensure good closures are at openings, including chimneys and the like. If you can create a physical barrier to keep these ladies out, there won't be much to cry about.

Except for little Ann . . . she crept under a frying pan?

Western Conifer Seed Bugs

As things get cooler here in New England, everything seems to want to join us inside the house. Some of our visitors are dangerous. Some are destructive. Some are more of a nuisance than anything else. And I'm not getting into awkward holiday dinners with the relatives.

What Are Western Conifer Seed Bugs?

One of these occasional invaders is the Western Conifer Seed Bug. The Western Conifer Seed Bug is often confused with Stinkbugs. This true bug is fitted for living on conifer seed trees, such as firs and pines. It has an almost diamond shape from the top. The adults are about 3/4 inch and appear brown. Under their wings is a yellow or orange dorsal abdomen with black patches.

When they are active and fly, the sound they produce is very similar to bumble bees. The eggs hatch in the spring, and the resulting nymphs are reddish-orange. They grow throughout the summer, and by fall, they are looking to come inside. In the American Northeast, these bugs are potentially dangerous to the health of some conifer trees, but not to a crisis level.

How to Spot Western Conifer Seed Bugs In Your Home

Inside the home, you may see them slowly creeping around, especially near the windows or other cracks. They do not damage the structure or present any real hazards, but they can be annoying and concerning to people inside the home. Western Conifer Seed Bugs are usually seen twice per year in the home. It is not two separate invasions, but rather one coming and going. They seek out warm places in voids to get through the winter. They enter the cracks and crevices along the exterior trim, windows, etc.



As the temperatures change, they are seen crawling about, confused.

Once the real cold sets in, they usually lay low until the sun starts hitting the house, where they're overwintering in the late winter or early spring.

While they are moving around, vacuuming or picking up the individuals will minimize your time with them. Once they're in, however, they're usually in. It is not usually deemed appropriate to take extreme chemical measures to flush them out.

Preventing Infestations

To prevent infestations, the most effective treatment includes replacing ill-fitting screens, caulking gaps, and repairing wood to make the structure as tight as possible. A chemical barrier treatment towards the fall will also assist in limiting entry.

Dealing with Wasps in the Fall

Wasps in and around the home can be a hazard to you and your family. So, how does one determine if there's an infestation, or just pollinators at work?

Wasp Species

Different times of the year will show different wasp species. Paper wasps will be most prominent in the spring versus more aggressive wasp species. These wasps build the open combed nests behind shutters, in attic vents, and nestled into the peaks of home. In the late summer and fall, German Wasps, also known as Yellow Jackets, and Bald Faced or White Faced hornets rein supreme.

Of these two aggressive species, Yellow Jackets are the likely type to nest inside of a home. Each also build domed over paper nests along roof lines, in trees and bushes, and underneath benches and tables, but yellow jackets also love voids. They'll set up shop in a hole in the ground, expelling its original excavator, or take over a wall void through any gap they can find.

A rustling sound like paper may be heard in a wall void, or a steady supply of individuals in an area may be signs of wasps nesting in the home. Wasp stings can not only be painful, but may present some people with allergic reactions. Children and the elderly are more vulnerable to severe reactions by nature.

Treating & Removing Wasp Nests

Remediation of a wasp nest is best done by a professional. Treating and removing the nest can be a dangerous job. Insecticides can be applied directly into the window of the nest. Removing the nest of Yellow Jackets may not always be easily achieved. When it's not possible, a professional will inject insecticides into the void which will then travel throughout the nest and leave behind residual protection. The old nest will dry up and be nothing more than a paper deposit in the void. Removal is always preferred, however.



Wasps will not re-infest a dead nest, but closure of entry points should be done to fully diminish the chances. Usually, some caulking around the gaps will do. It is not unusual to see some activity for up to a week after treatment, but the vast majority will be expired within the first day or two. When wasps are not directly threatened nor have a nearby nest to defend, they are not very aggressive, but precautions should still be made.

What to Do Around Wasps

The best thing to do if any wasp is buzzing around you is to hold your breath. Carbon dioxide is seen as a threat trigger. Then, calmly walk away. The worst behavior which will routinely trigger an attack is to breathe heavily or scream, flail your arms, and run around in circles. Traps away from the frequented areas of your outdoor space may also help diminish the overall population. And if you have flowering plants, expect some wasps. But, if they're working, they usually just want to be left alone.

Natural Methods of Wasp Removal

When we talk about pest control, chemical applications are usually discussed. But, not all pest control requires poison. Actually, the right mix of pesticide applications and a more holistic approach often gives the best results on all levels. Wasp control is no exception.

When is Natural Wasp Removal Appropriate?

Natural wasp removal and control may be desirable for a variety of situations. An area may be particularly sensitive to pesticides, for either human or non-target animal considerations. Some bees, such as honey bees and other key pollinators, may be moved to protect the natural balance. And remember, bees, wasps, and a variety of flying insects are pollinators. We have the responsibility to do our best to both protect the quality of human existence, and maintain beneficial life around us.

For these reasons and more, non chemical control methods should be considered.



Non-Chemical Ways to Remove a Wasp Nest

For non-chemical means of wasp removal, the location of the nest, if one exists, is an important factor. For example, if a nest is in a bush or on a tree limb, or anywhere else exposed, removal of the nest may be done. Proper protective clothing must be worn, but it is often safer and more effective to remove it at night. Simply slip the nest into a good bag, canvas or thick enough plastic to not tear, and snip the branches it's built on, tie it up, and remove it. For yellow jackets in the ground, place a bowl or something tight enough to close the hole for a couple weeks. Sealing off any void tightly enough may control a wall nest, but make sure there's no way out.

Wasp Prevention

Prevention is the best key. Close off openings where wasps may enter the house, scrape down the beginnings of nests before they have a chance to grow, and limit the food sources from around your property if you are particularly sensitive to wasps. I find traps, such as bottle style traps and fly paper, can do a fair job limiting a population from being too comfortable in an area. If bees and wasps are hovering around you, the best thing to do is to hold your breath and slowly walk away. Unless threatened, working bees and wasps prefer to be left alone.

Professional Wasp Treatment

Professional attention is always the best way to go. A professional will have the knowledge to accurately assess the situation, have the equipment to take control of it, and the experience to accurately communicate

the best way to move forward. Even if chemical pesticides are not being used, wasp nests need to be taken seriously, and handling a dangerous pest shouldn't be taken lightly. Especially with unconventional methods.

Preventing Spider Infestations in the Fall

As the temperatures start to fall, and autumn is upon us, all the world's little critters try to join us in our warm and safe homes. Some of these critters have eight legs. These, of course, are spiders.

Spider Species

There are a wide variety of spider species invading homes in the fall. In the northeast, there are a couple of venomous spiders known to exist, although either are quite rare. The black widow and the brown recluse. Neither create webs inside the home. Often seen in the home are cellar spiders and harvestman spiders, both have been called daddy longlegs. Also seen are common house spiders, sac spiders - which have been known to bite, although the reputation for causing necrosis is largely exaggerated - jumping spiders, and so on. As their food sources decrease along with the temperature, any of these may be found in a home.



Controlling Spiders in the Home

Controlling spiders inside of the house is both simple and difficult. Here's the simple part. Keep your home free of clutter. Vacuum the spiders and the eggs, and clean out any and all webs. Maintain dry conditions in your home, especially in the basement. Trim back any overgrown vegetation and commit to a three foot buffer zone around the exterior perimeter of your house. Glue traps may be of some assistance as well. Just remember to throw them away. The hard part? Well, try to do all of that while maintaining normal semblance of a life.

Why Chemical Spider Treatments Usually Don't Work

Also, chemical control alone often results in failure. Spiders live in the cracks, crevices, and gaps where their prey is bound to wander. Spiders on webs often don't even touch the surfaces where chemical is sprayed. Controlling the environment which may be conducive to spiders is the real key. For prevention around the house, consider agreeing to an exterior chemical treatment.

If conditions are maintained and an appropriate level of professional pest protection is applied to the outside of your home, the only eight legged freaks you see in the fall may be on the cheesy horror movies and trick or treaters.

Roaches

Few pests are more concerning to a homeowner than cockroaches in the home. Depending on what kind of roach you're experiencing, it could be a warranted concern. Let's rule out a few to focus on the real problematic roach.

Roach Species

In New England, to generalize, larger brown American roaches and dark colored oriental roaches are usually found in older commercial or industrial buildings, or in lower levels of apartment buildings with city sewerage. In homes, these are not common problems.



So, we are left with two smaller roache types. Both tan to brown. Both similarly sized. Both closely related to grasshoppers. But each are very different in cause and solution. Wood roaches are not a big cause for concern.

They are occasional invaders and can be disregarded for the most part, with mechanical exclusion and cleaning up of their habitats, such as leaf litter, clutter and the like, as effective means of diminution.

And so, we are left with the German Cockroach. Some indicators of a German Roach infestation may be witnessing the roaches scurrying at night when a light is flicked on, pepper like specks in cabinets and along seams in places like the kitchen and bathroom, egg sacs dropped about, and a potent oily aroma.

Roaches Are a Health Concern Too

If the creep factor isn't enough, roaches can be a significant health concern. They walk around your kitchen and other living areas, dragging around all sorts of bacteria in their wake. They spread salmonella among other things. The droppings, dead particulars, and other organic deposits are a major factor in respiratory exasperation. The health concerns cannot be overlooked here.

Why DIY Roach Treatments Don't Work

So what do you do? Grab a bomb over the counter from your local store? Sure, it will kill visible adults, but each egg sac can contain around 48 roach eggs and are completely unaffected by the bomb. How about the hidden roaches? And what about the infestation, localized say in the kitchen and is now spreading throughout the house and wall voids. These OTC instant kill bombs and sprays often make the issue worse and prolonged.

Professional Roach Treatments

A professional consultation and treatment is your best chance for completely eliminating the infestation. After a professional treatment, continue cooperation by not spraying on your own.

Once the treatment has succeeded, take extra care to not reintroduce a roach population. Be mindful about your shopping habits. Populations are often moved around via produce, especially specialty produce. Keep your cabinets free of clutter, so habitation is less inviting and infestations can be more quickly identified. Inspect any second hand furniture for signs of roaches. Keeping glue board monitors in key areas such as under sinks and behind refrigerators may also be a good idea.

Conclusion

Although bugs are a common occurrence in Massachusetts, that doesn't mean you want to share your home with them. Wasps, spiders, and roaches can not only be annoying, they can also be dangerous. Proactively taking steps to eliminate these critters from your home and keep them from coming back is critical.

While some bugs, like wasps, can be removed naturally, other infestations must be handled by a professional. Any time you have an insect problem in or around your home, consult with a pest control professional for the best guidance on how to handle the infestation. Your pest control team can help you determine whether you need physical removal, chemical treatments, exterior sealing, or all three.

About

Colonial is one of the largest and most sought-after pest control companies in central and eastern Massachusetts, southern New Hampshire and southern Maine. Our service area runs from Worcester to Boston, Framingham and Natick to Andover and Lowell, Nashua to Manchester up to Portsmouth , Fitchburg and Leominster down to Milford and Franklin and includes all surrounding towns.

Since 1984, Colonial has been providing effective, low-cost protection from pests for residential homeowners. Today, we have more than 8,000 satisfied residential customers under contract for preventative maintenance.

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*Framingham 945 Concord Street
Framingham, MA 01701
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*Fitchburg 344 Main Street
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*Andover 300 Brickstone Square, Ste 201
Andover, MA 01810
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*Marlborough 225 Cedar Hill Street, Ste 200
Marlborough, MA 01752
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Service Centers: New Hampshire

*Nashua 20 Trafalgar Square, Ste 423
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(603) 880-7900*

*Bedford 3 Executive Park Drive, Ste 9
Bedford, NH 03110
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*Portsmouth 155 Fleet St.
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