

Pest Control Fact Sheets

Bed Bugs



Facts about bed bugs

- Bed bugs are bloodsucking parasites of man and also feed on chickens, bats and some domestic animals
- A bed bug bite is painless. It is their saliva that can cause irritation, swelling and redness
- They feed at night or at any time if the room is dark
- They live in bedclothes, mattresses, bedsprings and frames, soft furnishing, cracks and crevices and under wallpaper
- Females lay between 200-500 eggs in batches of 10-50, on rough surfaces such as wood or paper. Eggs are white, sticky and about 1/3 inch long. They are laid in cracks or crevices, never on people
- A bed bug's entire life cycle can take between 5 weeks to 4 months, depending upon the temperature and availability of food

How can you identify a bed bug?

- Mature bed bugs are between 1/4 - 3/8 inches long, rusty red/brown to mahogany coloured, oval, wingless insects. Their bodies are flattened, with well developed antennae and small compound eyes
- After feeding, they become swollen, longer and dark red to dark brown in colour

Recognising a bed bug problem

Because they are so small, bed bugs are hard to see. They do leave signs that they are present, such as black or brown spots of dried blood, eggs, egg shells and cast skins on the surfaces where the bugs rest.

Typical resting areas include under wallpaper, behind picture frames, inside cracks and crevices near to beds, bed frames, undersides of windows, door casings and loose moldings. When there are many bed bugs, there is often a bad smell.

What can you do?

- If you have a lot of bed bugs you should contact either a pest control company or us straight away

- Clean furniture, bedding and mattresses regularly. If you have a bed bug infestation, steam clean or throw away mattresses
- Repair cracks in walls, windows and doors
- Wash legs of beds in soapy water, then coat legs in double sided sticky tape or petroleum jelly. Alternatively, place the legs of the bed in glass jars or metal cans. Bed bugs cannot climb glass or metal easily and as they cannot fly this will prevent them from being able to feed
- Treat all hiding places with an insecticide that is designed for bed bugs. Only apply to mattresses if it says it is safe to do so on the label. Allow mattresses to dry for several hours before lying on them

Treatment we provide

If the insect is identified as a bed bug we will spray the affected area with an insecticide suitable for treating bed bugs.

What you need to do before we carry out treatment

- Strip beds and put the bedding in a tightly secured plastic bag. All bedding should be washed on a hot wash before being returned to a treated room
- Our Pest Control officers must be able to get access to all areas of an affected room in order for treatment to be effective. Could you please make sure that you move any furniture away from the walls, this includes drawers and cupboards, this is so that we can gain access to the areas behind the furniture. Do not take the items out of the room as you could infest other areas. Do not put items that have not been washed or treated in to a treated room as it could cause re-infestation
- If you will experience difficulty in preparing for a treatment please let us know and we will help wherever we can
- If you see a bed bug after treatment, it does not mean it has not worked. They may have hatched after the treatment and will be killed off by the pesticide once they come into contact with it



Carpet Beetle

Carpet beetles feed on animal and plant substances such as wool, fur, feathers, hair, hides, horns, silk, and bone as well as cereals, cake mixes, red pepper, rye meal and flour. Other food sources include powdered milk, dog and cat food, leather, bookbinding's, dead insects, and even cotton, linen, and rayon when stained with spilled foods or animal excreta. The larvae cause the damage, crawling from room to room and living behind baseboards and moldings, and in air ducts, dresser drawers, carpets, clothing, and furniture. Adult beetles fly readily and may be found outdoors feeding on pollen, especially on plants with white or cream colored flowers. Some adult beetles are attracted to flowering plants close to homes and can easily enter through small openings. Some infestations are started by adult carpet beetles that fly from house to house. Also, carpet beetles breed and feed outdoors in places such as bird and rodent nests. Eggs and larvae may be carried into homes on articles containing wool or other animal fibers.

Life cycle

All carpet beetles pass through four stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. Adults fly readily and during warm sunny days feed outdoors on pollen of various flowers and shrubs, especially spirea and crepe myrtle. Depending on the species, each female may lay 40 to 90 white eggs, which hatch in 8 to 15 days. Eggs laid indoor are found in lint accumulations near the food source, in air ducts, under heavy furniture, behind baseboards, etc.

Dealing with carpet beetles

Locate the source of infestation before treatment. Carpet beetle larvae prefer to feed in dark, protected places. Check lint under baseboards, in and under upholstered furniture, in air ducts, in stuffed animals, in stored cereals or grain, in abandoned bird or wasp nests under eaves or in attics, in woolens, in clothes closets, in furs, etc. Also, check all boxes and suitcases in storage areas for the presence of beetles or damage. In all areas, cast skins may be more abundant than larvae. Adult beetles flying around windows may indicate the presence of an infestation

Cluster Flies Fact Sheet

Description

There are four main species of fly collectively known as cluster flies. They are:

The Autumn Fly (*Musca autumnalis*) - a small fly of about the same size and colour as the housefly, but with a yellow abdomen.

The Common Cluster Fly (*Pollenia rudis*) - a larger fly of a dull, dark, dusty brown/grey colour with a “tessellated” abdomen.

The Green Cluster Fly (*Dasyhora caynella*) - about the same size as a housefly, shiny green/blue in colour.

The Yellow Swarming Fly (*Thaumatomya notata*) a smaller species of hibernating fly, yellowish body/black markings, sometimes confused with the fruit fly.

Biology and Habitat

Cluster flies are very common; the adult flies hibernate during the winter months in roof spaces of houses and/or farm buildings. After this time the flies lay their eggs in the earth and/or animal dung. As the soil temperature increases in late spring, the eggs will hatch. The larval stage is parasitic, entering earthworms and feeding upon them until emerging as an adult fly. There may be two to four generations of flies in a single year.

The common cluster fly prefers a warm wet summer, whereas the autumn fly prefers dryer, hotter conditions.

Cluster flies migrate from the outside conditions into the lofts of house and/or farm buildings during the winter months. Obvious signs of an infestation include large quantities of lethargic/dead flies around windows. Once in the roof spaces the flies will stay in hibernation until the spring.

Importance

There is no risk to public health.

Cluster flies do not damage property; they will die and become very unsightly if they do not successfully hibernate.

Water tanks in the loft spaces should be covered.

Cluster flies are not to be associated with dead animal bodies or faeces and there are no maggots.

Control

Cluster flies emit a clustering pheromone that encourages them to hibernate together and for subsequent generation to follow to the same property.

For small infestations around windows and behind curtains, they can be removed with the use of a vacuum cleaner. For large infestation in loft spaces, treatment is best carried out after the first frosts of winter; this usually ensures that all of the hibernating flies are in the treatment area. The treatment best designed at this

time is to treat with an insecticide space spray, Ultra Low Volume application through a Micro-Gen machine, will quickly knock down any flies present.



Common Rat – *rattus norvegicus*

The common brown rat originated in Asia and China. The common brown rat was first recorded in Europe at the beginning of the 18th century.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The common brown rat is usually around 20 to 27cm long and its weight is around 100 to 500g. The common rat is usually a brownish grey on the back and grey underneath, but colour varies. Rats have a single pair of upper and lower incisor teeth, which are continuously growing, which explains why they cause so much damage as they have to gnaw to prevent these incisors from growing too long which prevents them from eating.

HABITS:

Rats generally stay within 50m of its home, but can range up to 300m. They may move every 2 weeks or so depending on the food source they are feeding on and may travel several kilometres to find more food.

Rats are mainly active at night and can be found in fields, gardens and sewers. Rats are sexually mature at around 3 to 4 months old and can produce 6 to 11 young.

PREVENTATIVE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE YOURSELF

Compost bins should be placed on solid bases to prevent rats from burrowing underneath them.

Over hanging branches from trees that are touching the roof should be cut back to prevent rats getting access to the loft space.

Check sheds for holes in the floor and the back panels where rats may have gnawed through over the winter. These should be sealed to prevent further access.

Check for holes around the outside of the house especially around waste pipes, remember rats can get through holes as small as 25mm (1").

If you see a rat in your garden and you feed the birds, stop feeding straight away as this will encourage the rats into your garden.



Feral Pigeons

Feral pigeons roost on ledges, sloping roofs and under bridges, destroying insulation defacing surfaces and blocking pipes and gutters with droppings. In large numbers, pigeons can cause considerable nuisance from their droppings, nesting materials and general debris.

Pigeons have been shown to be infected with such disease as ornithosis and salmonellosis. There is little evidence to substantiate the claim that they transmit diseases to man.

Dealing with feral pigeons

The effective way to control pigeons in the long terms is to remove their food source and prevent them from roosting and nesting on buildings. A reduction in food will not result in the birds dying of starvation. They will just breed less often or move away to another location.

What can you do?

- Please do not feed the pigeons. Allow them to pursue a natural life of foraging for food
- Food litter left lying around will also attract rats and other vermin
- If you wish to feed birds, place birdseed on bird tables where a variety of species can gain access
- It is sometimes possible to scare pigeons away letting them know that a location is not a suitable nesting site, for example placing a piece of string with silver foil attached in the allotted area has worked in some instances
- Professional pest controllers may be able to prevent pigeons landing on roofs, balconies and other areas by utilizing many of the products available in pigeon proofing

Pest Control

Fleas



Description

Adult fleas are classed as parasites, living off warm-blooded animals. Different species of flea live on different animals. Cat fleas are approximately 2-3mm size, brownish in colour, and are responsible for the majority of flea infestations. Fleas have increased in numbers in recent years, which has been caused by an increase in the number of people keeping pets and by the tendency for pet owners to neglect cleaning their pet's bedding properly.

Central heating can provide the necessary warmth needed for fleas to breed and carpets can provide relatively undisturbed environments for flea larvae to develop. Flea bites appear as a tiny dark red spot surrounded by a reddened area which can be intensely irritating and usually persists for one or two days.

Life cycle

Flea eggs are about 0.5mm long, pearly-white in colour and are laid on the pet or in its bedding. 4-8 eggs are laid after each the flea feeds, and therefore a single female can produce between 800-1000 eggs during her lifetime - which may be as long as two years.

The eggs hatch in about 1 week into larvae which live in dark, humid places such as animal bedding and carpet fluff, feeding on debris and adult flea excrement. At worst, a cat's bedding can support up to 8000 immature and 2000 adult fleas.

After 2-3 weeks, the larvae spin cocoons and pupate and may spend winter in this state. The adult flea will then be stimulated to emerge by the vibrations set up by a passing host. Development from egg to adult is normally completed in 4 weeks but at low temperatures will take much longer.

Home treatment

Regular cleaning denies fleas breeding sites and significantly contributes to their control when you thoroughly clean your entire home, removing debris from all cracks and crevices.

Pets such as cats or dogs should be treated using veterinary products, which can be obtained from a local vet. **Always make sure you read and follow the instructions on the product label carefully.** Pets' bedding must also be thoroughly cleaned and washed.



German Cockroach - *blattella germanica*
Oriental Cockroach - *blatta orientalis*

The two most commonly found cockroaches in the UK are:

The German Cockroach and the Oriental Cockroach.

Cockroaches are large insects which range in size from 10-23mm they have a long antennae and two pairs of wings. The German Cockroach is dark brown and smaller than the Oriental cockroach, which is black in colour. The German variety can climb smooth surfaces.

Health risks

Cockroaches can carry food germs on their bodies and are responsible for the spread of diseases such as dysentery and gastro-enteritis. They will feed on almost anything including faecal matter. Food contamination will occur when the insect comes in to contact with food, food preparation surfaces or through faecal contamination of foodstuffs.

Life cycle

The female cockroach produces up to eight purse-like egg cases at monthly intervals. The cases can contain up to 30 eggs and nymphs hatch in 2-4 weeks (6-12 weeks for Oriental cockroaches). The nymph looks the same as an adult cockroach, only smaller.

Recognising a cockroach problem

You may see their eggs, which are the size and shape of a small kidney bean and brown in colour. You may also notice cockroach faeces, which looks like black pepper.

Where do they like to live?

Cockroaches can be found in premises where food is stored or handled. They will spend most of the day hiding in cracks and crevices in a building. They are most active at night and if a light is turned on will scamper away to hide.

Preventative treatment

You can help to prevent infestations by making sure your premises are clean and that there are no food sources or hiding places. Plug all small cracks around skirting boards, cupboards, pipes, sinks and water heaters with latex or silicone sealant. Larger holes will need to be patched. Move debris, firewood and rubbish away from the house and out of kitchens.

Professional products and help are required for treating a cockroach infestation.



Grey Squirrel

They are rodents and although known as 'grey' squirrels, their coats may become brown in summer. They are grizzled with tan hairs in body coats and white bellies. They are approximately 18 inches long, including a 9-inch tail. Their droppings vary in shape and colour, depending on diet, and are usually round or elongated similar to those of rats. Generally, they have two litters a year from December to January and then again from May to June. They can have a litter size of one to five. The life span of the female is between four to six years and the male is two to three years. Mortality rate is about 75% per annum.

They were first introduced to this country around 1876 and are now common throughout England, Wales and Scotland, being considered a pest in many areas.

What do they eat?

They feed on buds, shoots, nuts and ripe and unripe fruits. Often, squirrels take food at feeders intended for birds. Sometimes they chew to enlarge openings of bird houses and then enter to eat nestling songbirds. In gardens, squirrels may eat planted seeds and bulbs.

Are grey squirrels harmful?

They may carry fleas and other parasites.

They occasionally damage lawns by burying or searching for and digging up nuts. They will chew bark and clip twigs on ornamental trees or shrubbery planted in yards.

If they get into your property they can cause serious damage. They strip the insulation from electrical wiring, tear up loft insulation to form a nest and sometimes drown in cold water tanks.

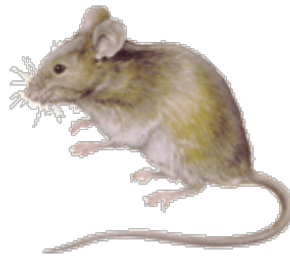
The noise they make, particularly at night, scratching and running about can be very disturbing.

Dealing with grey squirrels

Squirrels are protected from ill treatment by the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 and it is illegal, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, to release grey squirrels or to allow them to escape into the wild.

Any treatment service, therefore, should be carried out by a fully trained Pest Control Operative.

Don't feed or encourage squirrels into your garden. Do not put food on the ground, as this may attract other pests such as rats



House Mouse (*mus domesticus*)

The house mouse has been identified from pre-Roman Iron age deposits and is believed to have arrived in Britain in the 10th Century BC. It is likely that it was once a wild species somewhere on the borders of Russia and Iran, and has gradually spread with the practice of agriculture.

It is common in a wide range of urban and rural buildings all over Britain. Although mainly a house dweller, it may live outdoors for part or all of the year. **IT IS NOT FOUND IN SEWERS.** Mice are rodents & need to keep their front teeth in shape through grinding on hard materials. One of the dangers of mice living in buildings (houses) is the possibility of fires being started because of gnawed cables.

Mice do not have the ability to control their bladder and constantly dribble urine that can contaminate food.

Because mice are so small they can be carried into homes unnoticed in boxes, and laundry baskets. It is possible for a young mouse to get through a gap as small as 6mm (if you can get a ballpoint pen through the gap a mouse can get in) so it's a good idea to check around waste pipes that go through the wall such as those from the sink, and washing machine and seal any gaps.

Mice will build nests in hard to find places such as under floorboards, in wall cavities and loft spaces. Mice reach sexual maturity 42 days after birth, so it is important to deal with mouse activity as quickly as possible.

Mice are very inquisitive and like to go exploring they also like warmth so check in airing cupboards and behind cookers and fridges for signs of activity such as droppings.

Adult weight:	15grams
Length(head+body):	60-90mm
Length (tail):	80-100mm
Fur, colour:	Brownish grey. Lighter shades occur
Hearing ears:	Excellent sense of hearing large ears
Eyes sight:	Small eyes poor sight and colour-blind
Feeding habits:	Nibbles. Prefers cereals. Eats 3gm per day.
Life cycle:	Span 9-12 months
Sexual maturity:	6 weeks. Litter size: 5-6 offspring.
Max reproduction rate:	8 litters per year.

Absolute Pest Solutions Wales Ltd does not use gases or poisoning – we only use traditional trapping techniques, which ensures that the Moles are eradicated Humanely



Moles

The excellent soil in Wales is suitable for tunnelling, which attracts moles. The mole is a member of the Insectivore Order and is abundant throughout mainland Britain.

The mole can be found wherever there are suitable soils for tunnelling, but it tends to avoid shallow or stony soil, waterlogged or very acidic soil. It is most abundant in permanent grassland and deciduous woodland but can be found in playing fields, parks, golf courses and private gardens

The obvious sign of the presence of moles in your garden is the dreaded mole hill. These earthworks are the excavated soil from the moles feeding tunnels (runs) and living accommodation. Occasionally (more often in areas of high water tables) an exceptionally large mole hill will occur – this ‘Mole Fortress’ is the location of the moles nest.

Life cycle

Using their incredible senses of smell, touch and hearing the near blind mole patrols its runs on four hour cycles searching for food – predominantly earth worms but also soil invertebrates including insect larvae and molluscs.

Mole Breeding

The breeding season lasts from February to June. The gestation period is 4 weeks after which the young are born blind and without fur. The mother feeds them for 4-5 weeks and after this period the young leave the nest and start to catch food for themselves.

Shortly after this they will leave the nest site and search for a new home of their own. During this dispersal period, as they tend to move above ground, they are more vulnerable and fall victim to predatory birds' etc.

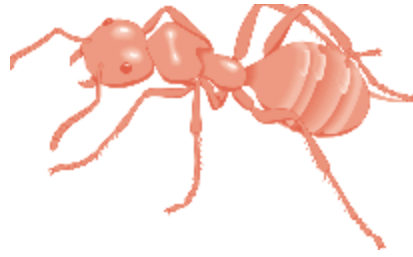
The females (sows) extend their run network to accommodate the new arrivals need for more worms. The males (boars) add to the gardeners misery by actively searching out sows to breed with.

The Sow has one litter of between 2 and 7 young (kits) per year. Being ferociously territorial when the kits reach maturity after five weeks they are forced out of 'mothers house' and must begin creating their own network of runs – often elsewhere in your garden!

Treatment

To remove moles we survey the site to help understand what is happening below ground. Through an understanding of mole behaviour and probing we locate the most likely tunnels for a successful trapping programme.

After setting an appropriate number of traps all mole hills are removed and the garden/lawn tidied to an acceptable degree (it may take several days rain to wash the last soil away). Returning within seven days all traps are checked and relocated if required.



Pest Control Fact Sheets

Ants - Garden and Pharaoh

Garden ants and Pharaoh ants are the 2 most common found in the United Kingdom. You will find information about Garden Ants on the back of this fact sheet.

Facts about pharaoh ants

The pharaoh ant is a tiny ant, dull-yellowish to light orange in colour and not much more than 1/16 in long.

They prefer warm areas for nesting. Nesting sites include dark voids such as walls, cracks in woodwork, stacks of paper, envelopes, under appliances and carpets. They are often found near moisture such as kitchens and bathrooms.

They travel from room to room within the walls along the plumbing pipes or electrical wiring.

Pharaoh ants are found where food is available. They will eat almost anything and can easily get in to unopened packages. Pharaoh ants trail each other and are attracted to greasy or fatty foods, meats, sugary foods, and other dead insects.

They are also attracted to freshly used bandages or soiled nappies. Because of their eating habits, they can contaminate food by wandering over it.

How can I get rid of them?

Treating for pharaoh ants yourself can make the problem worse. This is because if the ants are under attack they will split up and make several new colonies. A qualified pest controller should perform treatment.

Service we provide

A pest control officer will survey your property to see how bad the problem is. This will depend on how easily we can view the area where the ants are.

Advice on the necessary treatment will be given.

Facts about garden ants

- Garden ants are harmless and are not a public health pest
- They usually make their nests outdoors in lawns, flowerbeds, beneath paving stones and at the base of walls. During summer, winged females (Queens) and males leave the nest on 1 or 2 warm afternoons and take flight. During this flight the ants mate. They sometimes fly inside buildings
- Worker ants usually go in to houses for food. They like food that is sweet and sugary. When 1 ant finds food, there will soon be others and a trail of worker ants taking the food back to the nest

What can you do?

- We recommend that householders should treat for garden ants themselves. If possible, trace the trail of worker ants to the nest. You can usually see the opening to the nest by small piles of fine earth surrounding the entrance. If you can, pour boiling water into the nest
- If you cannot trace the nest, use an insecticidal dust or spray. The label should state that is for controlling crawling insects outside. Special attention should be paid to areas such as door frames, air bricks and waste pipes. Try to create an insecticidal barrier. If you find ants indoors, the same insecticide can be used. Insecticides containing Bendiocarb are usually found to be the most effective, but please make sure that:
 - You follow the instructions on the label carefully
 - You take care not to contaminate food with insecticide
 - The product clearly states that it is suitable for use in and around the home



Psocids

Psocids or booklice are soft bodied insects, yellowish brown in colour and rarely exceed 1-2mm in length. Some species have two pairs of membranous wings although there is the tendency to lose the wings in many species.

Occasionally, especially in the autumn months, people find their food cupboards have become infested by these tiny insects. They are often discovered in goods such as flour, milk powder, sugar or almost any dried food. They dislike light and are found in folds in packaging and cracks and crevices in cupboards.

Are Psocids dangerous?

No, they are common but harmless insects.

Psocids do not generally cause any damage or destruction, or spread disease, but people don't like discovering live creatures in their foodstuffs.

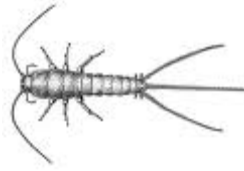
How can infestations be prevented?

Infestations are not caused by poor hygiene and are just as common in the newest and cleanest of homes as they are in older properties. These tiny insects dislike light or disturbance and prefer dark, warm, humid places, though they can tolerate dry conditions for some days.

If you find psocids in your kitchen, don't use an insecticide as you risk contaminating your food. The best method of eradicating them is to remove and dispose of all affected food. Clean cupboards with a dry cloth, or vacuum them and empty contents into a dustbin kept outside. Make sure the storage area is dry before restocking. This may be achieved by using a warm air blower such as a hair dryer.

Remember

Keep cupboards well ventilated and dry. Check cupboards regularly and check 'use by' dates. Check food on first opening, to ensure it is not infested. Safeguard against the warm, moist and dark conditions psocids like.



Silverfish

How to spot them

They are long, slim, scaly, segmented, wingless insects, with a pair of long fine antennae at the front and three tail-like appendages at the rear. Silverfish grow to about 12mm in length. The silverfish, as its name implies, is silvery and glistens in appearance.

Habitat

Silverfish are found in fairly moist areas such as kitchens, larders and mainly in bathrooms and basements. They can also be found in books and paper, slightly damp cupboards, behind skirting boards and loose wallpaper.

Silverfish are nocturnal and move very rapidly when disturbed and just turning on a light can make them run for cover. The silverfish feed mainly on small food particles and the paste on the back of wallpaper that has become detached. It attacks gums and glues of bookbinding, feeds on fragments of dead insects and may also eat textiles such as cotton and linen.

Life cycle

The female silverfish is believed to lay about 100 eggs, either singly or in groups, usually in crevices and cracks and glued to the surface on which they are laid. They are small and white when first laid but soon turn brownish and are difficult to find. The time they take to hatch varies from two to eight weeks, depending on the temperature and humidity of the breeding site. Newly hatched insects are about 2mm long and resemble the adults in appearance.

Control

When only a few silverfish are seen it is not necessary to take any action other than checking for damp. If large numbers of these insects trouble you they are easily controlled with a normal insect spray or dust, which can be bought from most hardware stores. Look for the products that are specifically designed to deal with crawling insects.

Dampness

The presence of silver fish is an indication of damp conditions. This may be a warning that repairs are needed. Look at the floor, walls and ceiling for signs of staining due to dampness. Check that all the water pipes, gutters and damp proof courses are intact.

Wasps



Description

Wasps (*Vespula vulgaris*) are beneficial garden insects, collecting insects and larvae etc. to feed to developing wasp larvae in the nest during the summer months.

Worker wasps will feed on a variety of foods including fruits such as apples, pears and plums. They collect wood to construct nests and may therefore damage the wooden fences and garden furniture.

By the end of the summer, the queen wasp stops laying eggs and the workers no longer need to collect food for the young in the nest. They become free to search for sweet things such as cakes or sweets and therefore can become a nuisance.

It is the ability of wasps to cause painful stings that concerns people most.

People's reactions to wasp stings can vary considerably from intense pain and swelling round the area of the sting, to a severe allergic reaction (known as anaphylactic shock) which can be life threatening.

Life cycle

The queen wasp lays eggs in the nest and hatch into larvae within a few days. 4-6 weeks after the eggs are laid the first generation of workers emerge. These are female wasps and are smaller than the queens and take over responsibility for maintaining the nest and finding food, in particular high protein foodstuffs for the larvae such as flies, caterpillars, or spiders.

The queen then devotes all her time to laying eggs and by the end of the summer the nest may contain 20,000 or more wasps. In the autumn the new queens and males produced from the nest mate and the fertilised queens search for hibernation sites. With the onset of winter weather the nests die out and are never reused

Home treatment

Treating wasps nest can be very dangerous. For this reason professional treatment is always advised. If you do try to treat wasp nests yourself wear 'bee keeper' type protective clothing to prevent being stung.

Nests can be found by looking for signs of wasp activity on fine days. You can find the position of the nest by looking for foraging wasps flying either towards or away from a nest.

Nests should only be treated with insecticides when activity around the nest is quiet, ideally in the late evening before dusk.



Wood Lice

Woodlice may look like insects, but in fact they're crustaceans and are related to crabs and lobsters. It's thought there are about 3,500 species of woodlice in the world, and 35-40 of these can be found in the British Isles. Woodlice are sometimes called pill bugs and slaters. The pill woodlouse gets its name because it can roll itself up into a ball.

Woodlice like damp, dark places and can be found hiding in walls, under stones and in compost heaps. Some species such as the common sea slater are only found on the coast.

A woodlice has 14 legs and an outer shell called an exoskeleton. When a woodlouse grows too big for its exoskeleton it has to molt to allow a new shell to take its place. Moulting takes place in two stages, first the back half is shed and a day or so later the front half falls off.

They have a pair of antennae to help them find their way around, and two small 'tubes', called uropods, sticking out the back of their bodies. The uropods help them navigate and some species use them to produce chemicals to discourage predators. Most woodlice are found on land, but their ancestors used to live in water and woodlice still breathe using gills.

Woodlice eat rotting plants, fungi and their own faeces, but they don't pee! They get rid of their waste by producing strong-smelling chemical called ammonia, which passes out through their shells as a gas.

After mating, females carry their fertilised eggs in a small brood pouch under their bodies. The young hatch inside the pouch and stay there until they are big enough to survive on their own.

A common woodlouse can live for three-four years. Apart from man, its main predators are centipedes, toads, shrews and spiders.

