



Termite & Pest Control
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NOV/DECEMBER 2008 **The Pest Bulletin**

Uninvited Holiday Intruders

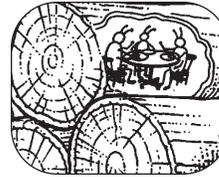
A number of pests become problems during the holidays. Keep your eye out for these.

Christmas tree pests. Fresh Christmas trees and greenery like wreaths are wonderful holiday decorations, but they can also harbor a variety of pests, including *spiders*, *aphids*, and *caterpillars*. These pests become active and start flying and crawling about in the warmer air indoors, and as the tree dries out. We recommend rinsing fresh Christmas trees and greenery with a strong jet of water before you bring them indoors. This will not only dislodge most pests, but dirt and

dust as well.

Firewood pests. When you bring firewood indoors from the cold, pests on it that were inactive warm up and start moving around. Avoid this problem by inspecting the firewood, especially looking under loose bark and in cavities, before you bring it indoors. Only bring in enough wood to last one day. Store firewood outdoors, off the ground, and preferably away from your home.

Holiday feast pests. *Ants*, *rats*, *mice*, *cockroaches*, and *other pests* can



have a feast themselves after your holiday feast. Before the night is over, seal leftovers, place food trash in garbage cans with tight-fitting lids, and clean the dishes, or simply leave them in a sink of soapy water.

Pests from overnight guests. A variety of pests can crawl inside suit cases. Although they are still less common, *bed bugs* are increasingly being spread this way. If the luggage was in a place known to be infested with bed bugs, don't bring it indoors. Unpack it outdoors, and if you find bed bugs, consult us.

Two Spreading Pests

The **brown widow spider**, one of five species of widow spiders in this country, has been spreading. Originally from Africa, the brown widow has spread into tropical areas almost world-wide. About 100 years ago it was spotted in southern Florida, where it gradually spread state-wide. But recently its spread has accelerated; it has been spotted in South Carolina, southern California and Hawaii, and a new study has just verified reports of the brown widow along the Gulf Coast states.



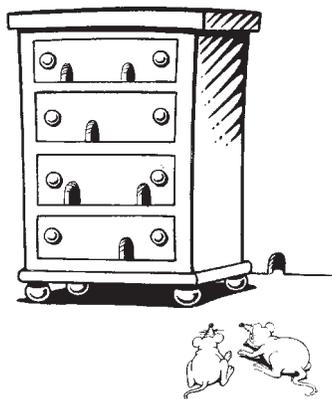
The brown widow is grayish brown rather than black, with an orange-to-yellow hourglass design on its underside. Although the spider has one of the more lethal venoms of the widow spiders, and there have been reports of it biting, fortunately it is much less aggressive

than black widows. It actually tries to avoid biting a person. When disturbed it is much more likely to withdraw into a silken retreat, or drop to the ground.

The **Turkestan cockroach** is becoming more of a serious pest and is rapidly spreading in this country. It originated from temperate regions of the Middle East and southern regions of the old USSR. It was first discovered in California in 1978 and has since spread to areas of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. In a very short time this species has become the number one cockroach pest in the Phoenix area. The Turkestan roach could eventually spread throughout much of the southern United States. This is a good-sized pest—female Turkestan roaches can grow up to one inch in length.



THANK YOU!
We want to THANK all of our long-time and new customers for your valued business and many referrals. We wish each and every one of you HAPPINESS and SUCCESS during the New Year!



Oh honey, it's perfect! Now all of our children can join us for the holidays!

Thank you for your business and referrals!



Termites and Katrina Damage

New evidence points to Formosan subterranean termites as having a possible role in the collapse of some key floodwalls during the devastating Katrina hurricane, according to a report in the Fall 2008 issue



of *American Entomologist*. Louisiana floodwalls have expansion joints between concrete slabs, and these joints are sealed with oiled bagasse, a waste product that comes from sugarcane processing. Bagasse is highly attractive to termites, and inspection of a number of the floodwalls found that termites have eaten the bagasse, allowing water to seep behind the floodwalls. In one key area where the floodwall failed, the London Avenue Canal, *over 70% of the seams show signs of termite attack*.

Termites can also cause failure of soil dikes and dams. This is well documented in China, and the Chinese even have a 2,100-year-old proverb, "*One white ant hole can destroy a 1,000-meter soil dike.*" (White ant is another name for termites.)

Termites create extensive tunnels while searching for wood. Termites also excavate exit holes to the surface, where winged termites fly out during swarming. These tunnels, as well as roots they have consumed, act as water channels that flow into a dam or dike and compromise it.

Woman Shoots Herself Rather than Mice

A woman pulled out a .44-caliber Magnum revolver recently when she saw mice running across the floor of her trailer. But she accidentally dropped the gun, which went off when it struck the floor. The bullet went through the woman's kneecap, grazed a nearby man's groin and ended up in his coin pocket.

The mice escaped unharmed. We wonder how many bullet holes there are in her trailer from previous attempts to control mice!



Be Smart and Avoid House Fires

A fire in a residence occurs *every 78 seconds*, and most fires occur during the late fall and winter months. Many of these fires are started by known causes we all need to be alert to, such as frayed electrical cords, overloaded circuits, fireplaces, candles and space heaters that are left unattended, dry Christmas trees, smoking in bed, etc.

Pests can also cause fires, and fire safety experts estimate that 50% of the fires of "undetermined origin" are actually caused by rats and mice. Rodents gnaw through wires, causing shorts, and they often pack together loose, flammable materials to make their nests. For some reason they even seem to like gnawing on the flammable end of matches. Because of their incredibly hard teeth, their gnawing can ignite a match. (It is a good idea to keep matches in metal containers, not only away from rodents, but high and out of reach of children.)

Electrical shorts can also be caused by insects like termites and various ants, which for some reason are often attracted to electrical fields, and eat into the protective insulation and coatings around wires. Many birds will incorporate cigarette butts into their nests, and if a butt is still smoldering, it can ignite a dry nest.



A fire can be devastating. It is important to be alert and proactively eliminate fire hazards. This is just *one more reason* why regular professional pest control service is especially important during the winter months.

NEW DESIGNER FLY SWATTERS!

And you thought you had everything! Why settle for a *regular* fly swatter when there are *designer* fly swatters? Instead of the swatter webbing being dull and common, these fly swatters are actually an intricate street map of Milan, Italy! They come in six colors and are available on the internet through *Charles and Marie*.

TRIVIA

A 14-month old Canadian boy is **completely blind** and has other neurological effects—he cannot sit up on his own—because of a rare disease caught from raccoons. The disease is caused by ingesting roundworm eggs found in raccoon feces. Young children with a history of eating dirt are most at risk. The first case of this kind was reported in 1984. Since that time, there have been fewer than 25 cases reported in the United States and Canada.

It is amazing how many cockroaches you can have after just one year, starting with **one pregnant stray cockroach**. This is assuming no pest services and the roaches have easy access to food, water, and shelter. With one American cockroach, in a year you can end up with **480 mature adult cockroaches**—an amazing number! But compare that to our most common cockroach, the German cockroach, which matures much faster. After just one year, you could have **over 63 million mature roaches**—a truly frightening number!