

# PestGazette

WINTER 2011

Brought to you by **TERMINATECONTROL.COM**



Gary Packer, Owner

## Bed Bugs on the Move

**B**ed bugs have made a remarkable re-emergence in the United States. Bed bugs can survive a wide range of temperatures and atmospheric compositions making them a difficult pest to get rid of. These busy little blood-suckers are popping up in every corner of our society, causing their victims a lot of discomfort.

We know bed bugs are excellent little hitchhikers. They can hitch a ride on almost anything. But, do bed bugs spread by any other means?

Not only do bed bugs hitch rides, but they also have a very successful reproductive strategy. Bed

bugs use pheromones and kairomones to communicate regarding nesting locations and reproduction. This makes it easy for the males to seek out the females to begin the reproductive cycle.

A combination of hitch-hiking and a unique reproductive behavioral strategy allow bed bugs to become widespread very quickly. Bed bugs will be a challenging pest for some time to come. If you are worried your home may be in danger of a bed bug attack, contact us today! We are your bed bug control specialists! ■

## What Goes Bump in the Night?

**H**ave you ever awakened to strange sounds in the middle of the night? Heard scratching or thuds in the attic? It's probably not ghosts or goblins, but maybe something equally creepy ... rats! Pests in the home are often detected by sound. A thorough inspection of the attic may reveal the noisy culprit to be roof rats.

Roof rats (also known as Ship rat, House rat and Black rat) originated in tropical Asia and spread through the Near East in Roman times before reaching Europe by the 6th century AD and spreading with Europeans across the world. Black with a slender body, the roof rat has pinkish feet and a grayish-white underside. Its tail is longer than its body, it has large ears and a short snout. Adult rats have a body length of about 6.5 to 9.5 inches with a tail about 7 to 10 inches long.

Roof rats are active at night, dawn, and dusk. They prefer to munch on plants, but they will eat just about anything, including insects, feces, garbage and carrion (aka: dead critters). They move in packs or colonial groups of 20 to

*Continued on page 3*



Call Today!

1-212-242-5008

[WWW.TERMINATECONTROL.COM](http://WWW.TERMINATECONTROL.COM)

# Wacky Worms and Moths



*The Indianmeal Moth is one of the most common of the pantry pests in the United States.*

**H**ave you recently noticed small moths flying in a zigzag fashion around rooms (kitchens and pantries) in your home and making their way to lights, such as T.V. screens and computer monitors, at night? Or perhaps you've seen the strangely-colored larvae (worms) crawling up walls and suspended from the ceiling attached to a single silken thread.

Your home may be infested with Indian Meal Moths, one of the most common of the pantry pests in the United States. Indian Meal Moths are a stored product pest and can be imported within a number of different items. Food and non-food items include grain products, dried fruits, seeds, nuts, crackers, powdered milk, baking mixes, candies, dry pet food, bird seed, candles, and even craft items. You will most likely find webbing within whatever product is infested.

Indian Meal moth larvae are about one half-inch long and dirty-white with a brown head. Larvae are sometimes reddish, pinkish, greenish, bluish, or even a purple depending upon what they have eaten. These colors come from food dyes and can give you some clue as to what they are feeding upon. Adult moths have a wingspan of 3/8 to 5/8 inch. Their wings are a mix of silvery-white and bronze while folding roof-like.

These moths are found all over the U.S. and are active from summer to fall in northern areas and year-round in the south. Moth larvae tend to move away from light while adult fliers are drawn to light. This particular behavior can be instrumental in locating an infestation after you have looked everywhere in your kitchen and pantry for infested items.

## Seeds, Please

If you've searched your kitchen cabinets and pantry for the pests and still have no luck, check the bird seed. One of the major products that favorably imports these annoying pests is bird seed. Many people store bird seed in their home's basement,

garage, or crawl-space. Over time, you may forget about the half-used bag of bird seed in the basement until one day you begin to see larvae and/or adult moths in your home. If you can track down the source of the infestation, you can generally eliminate the problem. We can also monitor your home over time to be certain no other sources exist.

If you still can't find the source, give us a call and we'll help. We can monitor the behavior of the adult moths' attraction to light. If moths are being seen only in the more remote regions of the home, the source may be right above you.

## For the Birds

Occasionally, a bird problem can develop in your attic and you may not even be aware of it. One of the main pest birds that will roost or nest in your attic is the Starling. They often enter attics through damaged vents and have even been known to tear out damaged vent screens in order to roost or nest. During the daily activities of the birds, food materials like bird seed can be imported into attic areas. Over-time adult Indian Meal moths may locate these food sources and infest it.

Starlings are 7 to 8 inches long and their color varies by season. In the summer, they are purplish-black or sort of iridescent. In the winter, feathers are white and gold or appear speckled. The droppings of Starlings contain bacteria, fungi, and other disease organisms. Droppings can stain and cause considerable damage. In addition, Starlings can promote blood-feeding bird mites within your home.

## Mystery Solved

Once adult Indian Meal Moths are established within attic spaces, they are drawn into living areas through lighting fixtures, which can explain why they often seem to come from "nowhere."

We can eliminate both your bird and moth problems. No more mysterious, strangely colored worms or moths! No more unwanted dirty-bird residents! Don't turn your house upside-down; call us today and we will solve your pest mysteries! ■

*One of the major products that favorably imports Indian Meal Moths is bird seed.*



# Fungus Gnats: Potted Pests

**F**ungus gnats occasionally become a nuisance indoors when adults emerge in large numbers from potted plants or flower boxes containing damp soil. Adults are attracted to lights and are often first noticed at windows. Fungus gnats are often mistaken for mosquitoes since adults look very similar to an untrained eye.

Fungus gnats are small, dark, short-lived flies whose larvae feed on plant roots or fungi and aid in the decomposition of organic matter. They are quite small at 1/8 to 1/4 inch and are brown or black with smoky wings, and have long antennae. They are usually found in moist, shaded areas. Indoors, these flies can be found breeding in house plants and this often indicates over watering.

Female fungus gnats place their eggs in soil and larvae burrow in and eat the decaying plant matter or fungi. Pupae, or the resting stage of fungus gnats, occur near the soil surface. This cycle can be year-round within your home.

If you have a fungus gnat problem, contact us today, and we will swat them from your home or office! ■



*Photo credit: Peter H. Kerr, California Department of Food and Agriculture*



*Photo credit: entomology.wisc.edu*



## Roof Rats (continued from page 1)

60. Females often make a nest of shredded material in attics or roof cavities. Female rats can have a litter of up to four to 10 pups.

Roof rats occur worldwide and they are implicated in carrying the flea that spreads plague.

If you have recently heard strange sounds in the middle of the night, contact us today to schedule your professional inspection. We can evict these unwanted guests. ■



Fleas are an itchy nuisance and can threaten the health of your pet.

If your home is infested with these annoying insects, give us a call today.

# Are Fleas Making Your Life a Circus?

**W**e want the best for our pets — we give them love, shelter, food, water, and veterinary care. In return, they give us unconditional love and hours of enjoyment.

One thing we do not want for our pets are fleas. Fleas have made a strong come-back in many parts of the county. Fleas can irritate and threaten the health of your pet. Fleas infesting your home can make your life a circus.

Fleas are wingless insects with mouth-parts adapted for piercing skin and sucking blood. Fleas are external parasites, living by hematophagy off the blood of mammals and birds. A common type of flea found across the U.S. is the cat flea. The cat flea's primary host is the domestic cat, but this is also the primary flea

infesting dogs in most of the world. They are pale to dark reddish-brown, 1/16 to 1/8 inch long, and flattened from side to side.

Cat flea adults normally feed on cat blood, but will feed on birds, dogs, wildlife, and even you. Some people are sensitive to flea bites and may develop itchy welts generally around the ankles.

Flea eggs and larvae are generally distributed where your pet sleeps or rests. Cat fleas are most abundant in the summer months, but can be an indoor problem year-round. Cat fleas can pass tapeworms to you or your pets.

If fleas are making your life a circus, call us today! Your pets will thank you! ■



[WWW.TERMINATECONTROL.COM](http://WWW.TERMINATECONTROL.COM)

441 East 12th Street  
New York, New York 10009

Phone: 1-212-242-5008  
Fax: 1-212-477-9474  
[terminatecontrol@aol.com](mailto:terminatecontrol@aol.com)