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THE PEST BULLETIN

Wasps & Spiders Are Everywhere

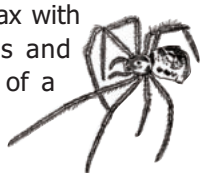
Summer brings an abundance of ants and many other pests in and around homes. Two common and especially nasty pests people encounter are wasps and spiders.

Wasps and their cousins, **hornets** and **yellowjackets**, have nasty stings that can be especially dangerous to anyone allergic to them. But they are a danger to everyone that disturbs their nest. They will come boiling out, often in large numbers, and immediately sting any person or pet who is nearby and they consider a threat to their nest.

Some wasp species are highly aggressive, and others are not, especially the "solitary" wasps like mud daubers and spider wasps. Some of the less aggressive wasps kill and use spiders for food, so these species can be left alone, but only if they are in an out-of-the way place that is unlikely to be disturbed by a person or pet.

Some **spiders** don't have nasty bites; others do. The problem is, how many people want to get close enough to these creepy crawlies to try to see what kind of spider it is? What's more, besides the real health concern about spider bites, spiders make a mess—they produce unwanted webs and strands of webbing that collect dust, and they leave the dry bodies of their victims, plus ugly stains below their nests.

Whatever your pest problem, we are known for providing effective control while keeping the safety of people, pets, and the environment forefront in everything we do. So relax with our professional services and enjoy the many benefits of a more *pest-free* summer!



Flies Are Breeding, Yuck!

A question people often ask us is, "Where are our flies coming from?" Each fly species lays their eggs in different places, and the maggots, or larvae, eat different kinds of foods. Here are common breeding places—some may surprise you.

Damp soil—*Fungus gnats* often breed indoors in the soil of house plants that is kept consistently damp. Any soil that is high in organic material and kept damp is a likely place for them.

Drains—*Drain flies* lay their eggs on the insides of slimy drains in sinks and basement floors, and in similar environments. The larvae spend their entire lives feeding on the gunk there.

Overripe fruits and more—*Fruit flies* ("vinegar flies") are strongly attracted to rotting or fermenting scents. Overripe or rotting fruits and vegetables are common breeding places, as well as gunky mops, and drain pans under refrigerators.

Animal carcasses and dead snails—*Carrion flies*, some of which are very large flies, lay their eggs on these.

Animal droppings—This is one of the most common breeding places for *filth flies* such as the common house fly. Removal of pet excrement on a daily or weekly basis is key.

Dumpsters, garbage cans, and trash compactors—Many kinds of flies breed in damp garbage and the gunk that accumulates in the bottom of these containers. Tight-fitting lids and at least weekly removal are important.

Earthworms—*Cluster fly* larvae feed inside the bodies of earthworms. If there are large populations of earthworms nearby (for instance, a nearby park with large lawns), huge numbers of cluster flies can emerge. They often enter buildings in early fall looking for a place to overwinter.

Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

Now is a good time to check to make sure plants have not grown over any crawl space or attic screened vents. Air must be able to flow freely through these areas to help decrease moisture levels. Ivy and shrubs need to be trimmed well away from these openings.

Burt starts to realize that no matter how good he tries to look, he is in fact just another bug.

Thank you for your business and referrals!

Brood X Cicadas Emerging

People in 15 states, ranging from Michigan and Illinois to Georgia and New York, are witnessing the famous Brood X cicada emergence.

There are many species of cicadas. *Annual cicadas* live in the ground for two to five years, but can be heard every year because the generations overlap. *Periodical cicadas* live in the ground for 13 or 17 years, and their emergence is synchronized. Brood X of the 17 year cicada is an amazing event. It is by far the largest cicada emergence in the country, and the most widespread, involving billions of emerging cicadas. This cicada event is unique to the U.S.

Cicadas are harmless to people, but the very loud buzzing sound that the males produce to attract females can be especially annoying, reaching 100 decibels when there are a lot of them. They typically stay outdoors and are not attracted to homes.

Adult cicadas live only four to six weeks, and will begin to die off in late June and July. Meanwhile the females will lay eggs that hatch into nymphs, and these nymphs burrow into the ground to feed on roots all their lives.

Forest Pests Are Spread by Firewood

People transporting and using firewood for a campfire or to warm their homes or a cabin is one of the main ways many serious pests of trees are spread.

Forests in this country are under attack by a variety of pests which are spreading. These include the gypsy moth, emerald ash borer, Asian longhorned beetle, and various bark beetles. Some of these pests are still alive when a tree dies and is cut down. When the wood is cut up for firewood, and transported long distances, it spreads these invasive tree-killers to new areas.

Using firewood is fine—just make sure it is from a local source, and instead of bringing it with you, always buy locally when you are on trips.

Alien Species Are Increasing

Alien species are organisms that humans have knowingly or by accident moved around the world to places where they do not naturally occur. Arthropods such as *insects, spiders, and crustaceans, plus birds, mammals, plants, etc,* are common invaders to new areas. Some of these aliens, including many household pests, go on to become agressively invasive species in their new environments. They can cause extensive damage to native ecosystems, and far-reaching economic damage.

There were an astounding 35,000 alien species recorded worldwide by 2005, the date of the most recent comprehensive global catalog. New research predicts that by 2050, there will be an amazing **36% increase** in alien species worldwide. This is due primarily to an expected increase in global trade and transportation, allowing many species to travel to new habitats as stowaways. It will be nearly impossible to stop the speed of the spread of new invasive species without stricter regulations and more rigorous enforcement.

Lyme Disease Update

*An astounding 30,000 tick-transmitted Lyme disease cases are reported in the U.S. each year, and perhaps that is only 10% of the total people infected, as most cases go unreported.

*Lyme disease has been found in all 50 states, but it is most common in the Northeast and upper Midwest.

*The number of reported cases has remained about the same during the last 10 years. But this varies by county—285 counties, primarily in the Northeast, are seeing an increase in Lyme cases, while 75 counties, primarily in Wisconsin, have seen a decrease in Lyme disease cases.

Formosan Termites Spreading Again

Formosan subterranean termites, originally from southern China and Taiwan, continue to spread around the world. They are considered one of the most invasive and destructive termite species. Unfortunately, they have now become established in parts of at least 11 states. They have been spreading in southeast states over to Texas, and are in Hawaii.

California is a good example of how tenacious Formosan termites are. They were first discovered in 1992 near San Diego. Extensive steps were taken to eradicate the termites, but unfortunately new infestations keep being discovered near the original infestation. Each time the termites are discovered, they are carefully eradicated in the home where they are found, but they somehow persist in the area. The latest find in the San Diego area was in 2018 and only 0.3 miles from the original infestation. This shows that these termites must be persistently fought in areas where they are found.

Last year in June a new infestation of Formosan termites was discovered in Canyon Lake, California. The infested home is 65 miles north of the original San Diego infestation. Using DNA techniques it was found that these termites did not spread from the San Diego area, but are a separate introduction.

This especially destructive termite will likely keep spreading in this country, but we must strive to eradicate it whenever possible.

Written specially for our valued customers by Dr. Wayne S. Moore. © Copyright Moore Consulting, 2021. All rights reserved.