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SUMMER 2022

THE PEST BULLETIN

The *Abundant* Pests of Summer

In summertime the pests are plentiful, multiplying like crazy as the weather warms. Here are some of the many common summer pests that become problems.

Stinging and Biting Pests: *Bees*, *wasps*, *hornets*, *yellowjackets*, *scorpions*, and certain *ants* and *spiders* pack stings that can be painful and dangerous. Other pests suck our blood, often without us knowing it while it is happening. These include *ticks*, *fleas*, *mosquitoes*, *biting gnats* and *flies*, *and bed bugs*.

Fabric Damaging Pests: *Clothes moths* and *carpet beetles* favor wool, but also damage other fabrics. *Silverfish*, *crickets*, and other pests occasionally damage fabrics as well as papers.

Pests Contaminating our Food: *Cockroaches*, *ants*, *flies*, *rats and mice* can become problems anywhere food is stored, cooked, or served—and often throughout our homes. *Stored food moths and beetles* find their way into many foods we keep for ourselves and our pets.

Wood Destroying Pests: *Termites*, *powderpost and other beetles*, *and decay fungi* all eat wood for food, *carpenter ants* chew into wood to create space for their expanding colonies, and *carpenter bees* tunnel into wood to create nesting sites. Either way, these pests cause serious damage when not controlled.

Occasional invaders: Hundreds of different pests may invade a home occasionally. Some are just a nuisance and clean-up problem, while others cause allergic reactions.

With our professional services, you can enjoy a great, pest-free summer!

Do You Have Carpenter Ants?

We receive many calls from homeowners who discover **winged carpenter ants** in their home. Carpenter ant colonies send out these winged "swarmers" in large numbers, especially during the first warm days of spring. The ants are often found near windows because they instinctively fly towards light when they leave the nest.

These winged ants are the reproductive females and males whose sole purpose is to start new ant colonies. The damage carpenter ants cause is scary enough, but seeing many of these swarmers indoors is a sure sign that the ants have a nest in your home. Take this as a wakeup call to phone us for control, before they cause expensive damage to your walls, roof, or foundation.

If you see **worker ants** (non-winged ants) indoors, or outside around your foundation, it does not necessarily mean there is a nest indoors. They may be nesting elsewhere and looking for food in or around your home. But to prevent carpenter ants from moving their main colony or one of several satellite colonies into your home, we need to control these ants. At the same time, all nests indoors must be treated.

Two other signs of carpenter ant nests indoors are:

Call us for a professional inspection and control at the first sign of carpenter ants. We are the area experts in dealing with these troublesome pests!

Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

Planting trees or shrubs near your foundation? Be careful not to plant too close! Take into account the size of the mature plants. Expanding tree roots can eventually crack the foundation, leaving hidden gaps where pests enter. Tree branches need to be kept well away from your home and roof.

The ad only mentions that you don't accept *"PETS"*

Thank you for your business and referrals!

Another Zika Virus Outbreak Coming?

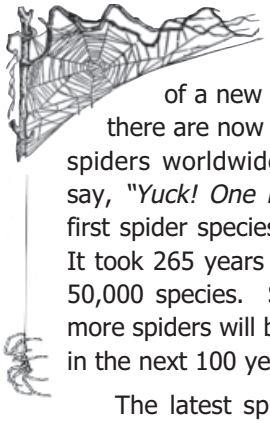
The Zika virus outbreak that became a global medical emergency in 2016 is likely to come back at some point. Like the virus that causes Covid, new research shows that Zika easily mutates, and it could quickly mutate to a new, more virulent form.

This virus is spread by mosquito bites from mosquitoes in the genus Aedes. These mosquitoes are mostly in the southern half of this country, as well as up both the east and west coasts.

For most people the Zika virus causes only a mild illness with no lasting effects. But for pregnant women who are bitten by infected mosquitoes, it can harm the developing baby, tragically causing microcephaly (unusually small head) and damaged brain tissue.

There is no treatment for the Zika virus, so as always, it is important to take steps to reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes.

Spiders Hit 50,000 Species



With the naming of a new species of spider in April, there are now 50,000 species of named spiders worldwide! Some people would say, *"Yuck! One is too many!"* The very first spider species was described in 1757. It took 265 years to discover and describe 50,000 species. Scientists believe 50,000 more spiders will be discovered and named in the next 100 years

The latest spider is a jumping spider discovered in Brazil. Jumping spiders are known to have the best vision of all the spiders. With their keen vision they crawl around, stalking their prey rather than building webs. There are lots of species of jumping spiders in this country, many more that live in tropical areas, and some even in very cold regions, including the Arctic.

In 2012, a jumping spider was the first to become a "spidernaut"—it lived 100 days on the International Space Station before returning to earth to live in an insect zoo.

Joro Spiders Haunt Georgia, and are Spreading

These invasive new spiders are colorful—bright yellow, blue-black and red. And they are huge--when their legs are fully extended they are 3 inches long! They build massive webs, sometimes spanning 10 feet, on mailboxes, porches, and gardens. Some people in infested areas report they open their door in the morning and can't walk out without getting covered in their sticky webs. People there say its "*like a scene out of 'Arachnophobia.'*"

Joro spiders probably arrived in a shipping container from somewhere in Asia. They were first spotted in Georgia around 2013, and now have spread east, south and north. It is believed they will eventually spread throughout the Southeast, and up the Eastern Seaboard states.

These spiders die off towards the end of the year as the weather cools, but they lay eggs before they die. Each egg sac contains more then 400 eggs which hatch in spring. The young spiderlings let out a strand of silk and the wind wisps them away, landing near and far. Humans can also unknowingly transport them on cars or in luggage.

Wasps Halt Flights During the Pandemic

In an example of unexpected problems caused by the pandemic, 8 airplanes at Heathrow airport were blocked from flying last summer after it was discovered that *wasps had built nests that blocked the pitot tubes*. These are small tubes in the exterior of an airplane that measure airspeed. The tubes are attractive nesting sites for certain kinds of solitary wasps.

One of the airplanes attempted a takeoff, but inaccurate speed measurement as the plane was speeding down the runway caused the pilot to stop. In two other cases, the planes left the ground, but quickly turned around when it was discovered that their air speed gauges weren't working.

The wasps are more likely to block the tubes when planes are grounded for a longer period of time. During the pandemic fewer flights meant planes stayed grounded longer.

There has been at least one plane crash that has been attributed to wasp activity. In February 1996, all 189 persons on board a flight died when their airplane stalled and crashed. It was later discovered that a small insect had built a nest in the pitot tube. The aircraft stalled and crashed because the pilot did not have an accurate airspeed. The plane had sat on the ground for 20 days, which was plenty of time for the insects to cause their havoc.

Fun with Names

A new millipede species was named recently after Taylor Swift. The millipede, named *Nannaria swiftae*, was found by the side of a road near a state park in Tennessee. The man who discovered the millipede is a devoted fan of Swift, who moved to Tennessee as a teenager to pursue a country music career.

The actor Jeff Daniels, who starred in the movie Arachnophobia, recently had a nematode named after him. *Tarantobelus jeffdanielsi* is a tiny worm that can infect and kill tarantulas. Daniels joked, "…in Hollywood, you haven't really made it until you've been recognized by those in the field of parasitology."