



PEST MANAGEMENT



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FLORIDA
(305) 594-4767

NEW YORK
(718) 931-8110

1-877-ASK-TORO

www.TOROPEST.COM
info@TOROPEST.COM

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The Pest Bulletin

Brown Widow Spiders Are Spreading

When you see a black widow spider in this country, traditionally you are seeing one of four different closely-related widow spiders in the genus Latrodectus. In 1935 a new widow spider, the brown widow, probably originally from Africa, was first discovered in Florida. For some reason these spiders have been on the move in recent years. They've now spread far beyond Florida, north to South Carolina, with recent sightings reported in North Carolina and Virginia. They have also spread to areas across the entire Southern U.S., and have become common in Southern California.

This is good and bad news. Brown widow venom, drop for drop, is just as strong as black widow venom, but for

some reason their bites tend to be less serious than black widow bites. So where they are displacing black widows, it is a good thing. However, in one survey of urban areas in Southern California, brown widows have become 20 times more common than black widows.

It seems that when brown widow spiders displace black widows, they can become much more numerous than black widows ever were. They also like to live under patio furniture, and under the curved lips of plastic plant pots and trash receptacles, exactly where people may place their fingers when moving the item.



This makes spider bites more common.

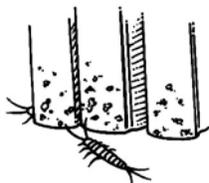
Brown widow spiders are prolific breeders—each female can produce 20 egg cases in her life, with up to 150 eggs in each egg case. Because the spiders themselves vary in color from tan to dark brown, with black accent markings, the best way to identify a brown widow spider is by their egg cases—they are the only ones with silk spikes, looking somewhat like a WW II harbor mine designed to blow up ships.

Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

Have piles of paper items? Now is a great time to go through your old magazines, newspapers, catalogs, files, etc., and either throw out, donate, or recycle any you don't need. Lots of papers provide food and hiding places for silverfish and many other pests.

Secretive Silverfish

Silverfish are so sneaky that homeowners are often unaware that these pests are in their homes. Silverfish stay hidden during the day and come out at night, eating irregular-shaped holes in paper products, especially books, magazines, and other papers in undisturbed places.



and once they've found it, they remain close to it.

Silverfish are often unknowingly transported from one place to another in boxes, books, and magazines. In apartments and homes they follow the pipelines between rooms. One female can lay an amazing 3,500 eggs during her lifetime.

These pests can tolerate some dryness, but they really thrive where the humidity is high, or where they have access to moisture such as in damp garages and basements, and from leaky plumbing or roofs, window condensation, etc.

Call us for professional control if you have these pests. Meanwhile, reduce moisture sources and humidity, and throw out old magazines and other paper products you don't need anymore.

Silverfish like to eat the glue on envelopes, wallpaper and book bindings, and especially paper that has a glaze coating on it. They also chew holes in starched clothing, and in linen, silk and rayon. They eat flour and cereal, as well as high-protein foods like dried meats.

The only time you may see silverfish is when you move papers and books that have been left undisturbed for a long time. They also can fall into bathtubs and bowls and be unable to get out of them. Silverfish crawl around looking for food,



The offensive pests plan their attack!

Yes! It's OK to S-c-r-e-e-e-a-m!



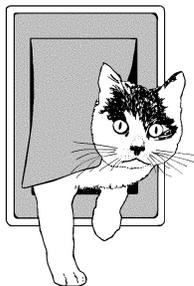
As a dinner guest, have you ever been in the awkward position of spotting a spider, cockroach, or other pest on or near the dinner table? Perhaps in years past, in some situations, the polite

thing would have been to ignore it.

Thank goodness proper etiquette no longer requires us to pretend we don't see it! According to a book titled "Miss Manners," by Judith Martin, you can now shriek loudly, if you so desire.

We must add that proper social etiquette (and friendship) would require you to go one step further—help your hosts solve their problem and avoid any future embarrassment with pests by recommending our services. We'll take care of their problem, and chances are they'll be so glad you told them about us that you will be invited back again real soon—to a bug-free home!

Keep Your Garage Pet-Safe



Garages are common storage areas for pesticides, fertilizers, cleaning agents, and other chemicals. Using our professional services reduces or eliminates the need for many of these products. But there is one common item people often aren't aware of that can be deadly if ingested.

The common antifreeze, *ethylene glycol*, tastes and smells sweet to pets (as well as children), but is deadly if they lap it up. A single teaspoon of regular antifreeze can kill a cat. Clean up any spills immediately, or buy "safe" antifreeze (*propylene glycol*), which is non-toxic for pets and wildlife.

Keep antifreeze and all cleaners, insecticides, etc., in a closed cabinet where curious pets can't get to them and tip them over.

Moths That Drink Blood?

In nature there are many kinds of organisms that drink blood—mosquitoes, ticks, fleas, some flies and gnats, some other insects, leaches, and vampire bats. But vampire moths? It's true—there is a group of moths in the genus *Calyptra* that are known as *vampire moths* because they are capable of drinking blood.



Vampire moths normally pierce fruit to suck the juice, but they will also drink blood from humans. Vampire moths can pierce even the tough hides of animals like elephants and buffalos, so our skin is easy for them to penetrate. Interestingly, only the males drink blood. They have been recorded to continue sucking blood for almost an hour if left undisturbed! Plus, the place where they bite becomes red and sore.

Fortunately, these moths are not found in the Americas, but in parts of Europe and other areas of the world. There is one species of vampire moth here in North America, but unlike its cousins, it apparently does not feed on blood. That's one less pest to be concerned about!

Electric Mosquito Swatter Causes House Fire



In the Philippines, a person swatted a mosquito with one of those electric insect swatters, killing the insect. Unfortunately, the dead mosquito fell on and ignited some firework rocket fuses that were going to be used for the holidays, setting them on fire. The resulting fire

completely burned the house to the ground and injured two of the residents.

These electric insect swatters, available widely in hardware and other stores, have an electrically-charged grid that zaps and kills insects. However, the dead, sometimes still-smoldering insects present a fire hazard people need to be aware of.

Silly Bug Jokes

What do you call a rabbit with beetles all over it?

Bugs Bunny

What did one flea say to the other flea?

Should we walk home, or take a dog?

What game do elephants play with ants?

Squash!

What did the mother grasshopper say to her children?

Hop to it.

What did the judge say when the stinkbug entered the courtroom?

Odor in the court!



Look for more jokes in the next issue.