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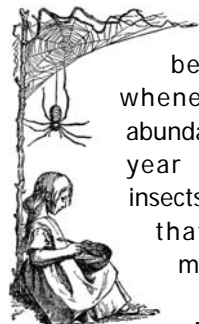
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MAY/JUNE 2016

# The Pest Bulletin

## Spider Alert!

This year we'll most likely see an abundance of spiders. You might even see some kinds you've never seen before! That's because whenever insects become abundant (and the weather this year has been perfect for insects to increase), the spiders that feed on them also multiply.



Here's the good news. Most spiders are not dangerous. In fact, most can't even pierce our skin with their mouthparts. Even the most tender-skinned person

among us has skin that is just too tough and thick for spiders. Fortunately, too, spiders generally try to avoid us, and the venom of most spiders isn't strong enough to harm huge giants like us.

However, some spiders can deliver a nasty bite. Of the over 3,000 species of spiders in the United States, about 50 of them are able to bite us. Of these, *black widows* (and some of their relatives) and *brown recluse spiders* are medically the most well-known, and have the most powerful venom. But venom from some of the other spiders can cause problems too, including swelling and pain. However, there has been a lot of research published

recently that is showing that many reported "spider bites" are actually the bites or stings of other pests like fleas, mosquitoes, ticks, and biting flies, as well as bacterial infections, etc.

Remember to never pick up a spider with an unprotected hand. Reduce clutter around your home. Properly light entryways so that you don't attract insects and spiders to these areas. Because spiders reinfest, regular professional treatments are needed to keep them controlled and prevent them from building their messy webbing.

## It's Wasp Season!

During the months ahead wasps and their kin will be multiplying and becoming much more serious problems. As the *area wasp experts*, we want you to know that there are many kinds of wasps—some are more aggressive and much more likely to attack than others when you get close to their nests.

**Yellowjackets and hornets** build the largest nests. These are often underground in abandoned animal burrows, and above ground in protected spots like tree cavities and under the eaves of your home. Each nest has a single entrance. These are the most dangerous kinds of wasps—large numbers will very quickly defend their nest if you disturb them or even come close to their nests.

**Paper or umbrella wasps**, often mistaken for yellowjackets, build nests in the shape of an inverted umbrella, with each cell exposed and facing down (as in the drawing above). The nest is attached



at a single point under eaves, in attics, or on branches. These wasps will attack if disturbed, but are generally not as aggressive as yellowjackets and hornets. However, a new paper wasp, the European paper wasp, is just as aggressive as yellowjackets and hornets.

Many wasps and bees don't live in colonies. None of these are likely to sting unless you put your hand right on one. **Spider wasps** are solitary wasps that nest in the ground. They have an intensely painful sting. **Mud daubers** build mud tubes under eaves and on walls. **Carpenter bees** are large bumble bee-like insects that tunnel into wood. Only female carpenter bees can sting.

Give us a call for service on any type of wasp or bee problem.

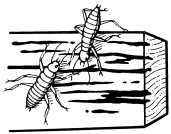
## Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

People sometimes bring pests indoors without knowing it. Once indoors, pests can multiply and spread. It is a good idea to double check to make sure pests are not hiding in things you bring into your home. Check things like potted plants, firewood, boxes and bags of food (including pet food), used furniture and appliances, and luggage.



They were all looking for homes without our pest control services.

## Termites Reinfesting



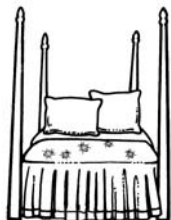
Termites were eliminated by baiting in the 32 acre Louis Armstrong Park in New Orleans in 2002-2003. A study followed the site over the years, to see how long it took for the area to become

re-infested with termites.

Using 808 bait stations, by July 2005 termite activity was found in up to 11 stations. The park was flooded by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005, but termites remained active and slowly peaked to 109 bait stations showing signs of termite activity by September 2008.

In April 2009, the researchers used genotyping and found 15 colonies in the park—8 colonies around the edges, that probably originated from colonies outside the park, and 7 inside the park, that probably came from termite swarmers starting new colonies. Both Formosan and Eastern subterranean termites were found.

The researchers concluded that termites can reinvade and completely re-populate an area where they have been controlled in only 4 ½ years. This assumes termites are abundant in the general area. *The study shows the importance of ongoing monitoring and control measures.*



## Bed Mattresses Can Spread Bed Bugs

Most people would never pick up a discarded mattress they saw on a sidewalk. These mattresses are not only *not* clean, but increasingly they are also infested with bedbugs.

But what about "renovated", "reconditioned", or "refurbished" mattresses? There are state laws that require companies that process these mattresses to sanitize them, but it has been found that bed bugs are not adequately controlled by some of these companies. Think twice about buying these mattresses, and look for the white tag that is placed on new mattresses, not the yellow or red tag on second hand mattresses.

If you know anyone who is discarding a mattress infested with bed bugs, be sure to tell them to slit it open, bag it, label it "Bed Bugs", and dispose of it properly, so that hopefully no one will re-use it.



## Car Burns Because of Bed Bugs

A Long Island, New York, man who saw bed bugs in his car was told by a friend that rubbing alcohol kills the bugs, so he proceeded to dump the flammable liquid all over the car's interior. Then he decided to sit in the car, relax, and light a cigarette! The resulting flames engulfed the car plus *two* cars parked nearby. The man suffered second degree burns as he escaped out of the car, and a helicopter rushed him to the hospital.

The car was so badly burned that detectives could not read the VIN number or the license plates.

Friends, alcohol in any form does not do a good job of controlling insects. Not only is it a danger because it is highly flammable, but in a recent published test it only killed about half the bugs. Our treatments are much safer and much more effective, and ultimately a lot less costly.



## Where you are Stung Matters

Researcher Michael Smith allowed himself to be *stung* at 25 different places of his body by honey bees, and discovered that where you are stung determines

how painful the sting is. The three *least* painful locations were the skull, middle toe tip, and upper arm, all scoring a 2.3 pain rating on a 1-10 scale. Some of the *most* painful places to be stung were the penis and upper lip, scoring 7.3 and 8.7, respectively. The nostril was the most painful place to be stung, scoring 9 out of 10.

This is a dedicated researcher! Sounds like very painful research. Best not to get stung at all.

## Hairs Keep this Ant Cool

In the Sahara Desert, the Saharan silver ant is unusual in that it crawls out in the hottest part of the day, when most other animals are avoiding the sun. New research shows that it is the hairs (shaped like triangular prisms) on the ant's back that deflect the hottest sun, keeping the ants cool. The hairs also give the ants their silvery look.

How did the researchers discover it was the hairs that kept the ants cool? By actually shaving the hairs off the tiny ants using a sharp scalpel blade. (Wow--that's an unusual skill!) They found shaved ants heated up in the sun, unlike the unshaved ants.

