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JULY/AUGUST 2014

# Pest Patrol News

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## Bed Bug Movement

As bed bug infestations continue to spread, more studies are being done on them and we are often surprised by what we discover. Here are some facts to help people better understand the movements of this serious pest:

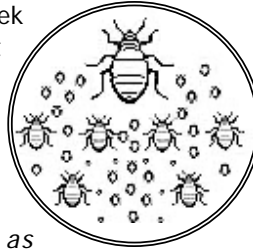
*Bed bugs are typically most active between midnight and dawn*, but if the person or people they are feeding on change their sleeping habits and start sleeping during the day, the bed bugs adapt and will shift their activity period, coming out during the day to feed on their sleeping victim.

*Bed bug movement is mostly triggered by the need for a blood meal*, which is influenced by temperature. They

feed about once a week at 64°, but when it warms up to 80° they feed every three days. That's why they are at their worse from July through September.

*Bed bugs stay as close to their sleeping host as their hiding places will allow them*. But as the bed bug population grows, they have trouble finding harborage sites, and they start wandering further away.

*Adult females are much more likely than males or young bed bugs to travel further away from the meal source*. Since these females often have eggs inside them, they have everything it takes to start new infestations.



*When seeking fresh food sources, bed bugs easily move from one room or apartment to another*. They can crawl under closed doors, along wires or pipes, and through ceilings. The adults can move about 4 feet per minute, much faster than originally thought.

Don't let bed bugs bite you or your loved ones! Call us if you have these blood-suckers.



## ANTS ARE INCREASING

Ants are highly successful insects and are becoming more serious pests every year. In fact, a number of years ago they overtook the cockroach as the most common household pest problem.

One of the main reasons ants became the #1 pest is that certain "super ant" species (sometimes also called "tramp ants") have been spreading. Pests like Argentine ants, odorous house ants, velvety tree ants, and pavement ants are just a few of these. Most (but not all) of these aggressive ants are from other countries and have become widespread around the world.

Super ants share common characteristics that help explain why they are so "successful" at spreading. They are spread primarily through human activity, and they easily adapt to living around us. Plus, most ants have only one egg-laying queen in the colony, but super ants

have many egg-laying queens in the same colony, so colonies grow much faster.

These ants also usually have many interconnected colonies. Instead of fighting ants from nearby colonies of the same species, as most ants do, the colonies actually cooperate to some degree. When they come to a new area super ants usually drive out other ant species, especially native ants. *Since the new ants have larger colonies, you end up with larger number of ants, and ants that more frequently invade homes.*

Don't let your friends and neighbors suffer with ant problems! Tell them about our expert ant services. Because of the gradual spread of super ant species, our professional ant control and prevention has become more important than ever before.

### Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

Food from bird feeders often gets scattered on the ground and it ends up attracting rats, mice, and squirrels to your area. Use feeders that have a seed catch tray underneath them. Also make sure rodents can't crawl up the pole that the feeder is attached to by using a non-climbable pole, or by attaching guards on the pole. Clean up spilled seed daily.



The investors on *Shark Tank* quickly rejected Norman's invention after it sent him to the hospital.

Thank you for your business and referrals!

## Stink Bug Overwintering Sites

The brown marmorated stink bug has been an increasing problem in many areas because it invades homes in the fall, spending the entire winter indoors. This new stink bug really stinks when disturbed—more than most other stink bugs.

Because so little is known about this pest, scientists reported in a recent study that they used trained dogs to sniff out where they were overwintering in a forested area. Surprisingly, they didn't find the bugs in downed trees or leaf litter—they were found mainly in dry crevices of dead, still-standing trees with thick bark, especially oak and locust trees.

The stink bug's choice of these kinds of overwintering sites shows why they are so attracted to man-made structures—homes to them look like their preferred sites of dry, tall trees with lots of cracks and crevices.



## Why Are Flies so Hard to Swat?

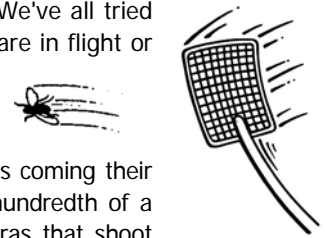
Lots of flies are buzzing this time of year! We've all tried to swat a fly and missed it. Whether flies are in flight or resting on a surface, they seem to have lightning-fast speeds and reflexes.

A recent article in the journal *Science* looked at flies and how they respond to perceived threats coming their way. Their reflexes are so fast (less than one hundredth of a second) that it required special high-speed cameras that shoot 7,500 frames per second to capture the action.

They discovered that flies perform different escape maneuvers based on which direction (their back, front, or side) the threat is coming from while they are flying. The complex pitch and roll maneuver that the flies perform is uniform and predictable, like a jet fighter!

When flies are resting on a surface, they also respond predictably. They first take a wild leap, stumbling up into the air, and only when airborne do they finally begin flapping their wings. This all happens so quickly, that flies are able to throttle up to full power in a 50th of the time it takes you to blink your eyes.

Any tips we can take home with us to use when swatting a fly? The researchers noted that if you approach a resting fly from its side, it will fly straight away from you, so if you keep your hand going in the same direction, you should be able to catch up to it. Try it.



## Good News on Cancer Risk

The Environmental Protection Agency studies and bans pesticides that cause significant health risks, but some people think that all pesticides are bad, and should be banned. One of their main claims is that they cause cancer—something that has been very difficult to study.

A massive new study in the United Kingdom was recently released that is one of the largest and longest studies ever conducted on this subject. It looked at 59,085 male plus 3,875 female commercial pesticide applicator's death rates between 1987 and 2005. The study found that this group of people, who are exposed to far more pesticides every day than the general public is, actually had **lower cancer rates** than the general public!

This new information, plus the fact that our company uses less and safer pesticides than what was used in the United Kingdom during that period, makes us very happy! And it makes our spouses and mothers glad! We hope it makes you feel good as well.

We don't mean to imply that pesticides be used by anyone in an unsafe manner, which people can do even with store-bought pesticides they use themselves. We are trained and experienced in proper pesticide use, so it helps everyone to be safer. This is good news.

## The Largest Spider Webs

A spider in Madagascar, first discovered by scientists in 2001, builds spider webs so large that they are sometimes seen spanning a river!



Webs from Darwin's bark spider have been discovered as wide as 82 feet—about as long as two city buses. It was found that the silk used to make these webs is the toughest spider silk on earth. The silk strands can resist twice as much force as any other spider silk before rupturing—over 10 times more than a similarly sized piece of Kevlar! This makes it the toughest biological material known.

Imagine walking into a spider web that large and tough!

## Chikungunya Virus is Coming

You may have never heard of the Chikungunya virus (sometimes simply called 'CHICKV') before, but health authorities are bracing for it to come to the U.S. So far, infections have been confirmed in several states, but they have all been from people who traveled recently to the Caribbean or Asia, where they caught the disease.

Chikungunya is a virus transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. We already have mosquitoes here in North America that are capable of spreading the disease, but they have not been infected yet. But if one of these mosquitoes bites a person here that has been infected in another country and is still sick, it then has the potential to spread the virus when it bites again. (This is similar to how the West Nile virus got started in our country more than a decade ago.)

Since the virus is in Brazil, soccer fans who return from the World Cup can also potentially introduce the virus here.

Common symptoms of the virus are fever, joint pain, and headache.

