

Take Precautions Against Fall-Invading Pests

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

Many pests survive freezing temperatures in the winter by crawling into openings in homes and other structures in the fall. The best method of preventing this is to seal openings around windows, doors, utility entrances and siding. The following pests are always a problem:

Multicolored Asian Lady Beetles

These are beneficial insects in crop fields and gardens because they feed on insects. Unfortunately, this species of ladybug is attracted to tall structures, near a woodlot, which stand out from the landscape. Houses on acreages often fit this description. These beetles often congregate in very large numbers. Once in walls, they cannot be controlled. During the fall and winter, they are active indoors on warm days. Use a vacuum to remove lady beetles.



Multicolored Asian Lady Beetles

Boxelder Bugs

These bugs feed on the leaves of boxelder and maple trees, becoming adults in the late summer. Once in walls they cannot be controlled. They can be active off and on throughout the fall and winter when temperatures are warm. Vacuuming works to remove boxelder bugs.



Adult boxelder bug

Spiders (Many Species)

Most spiders that enter homes do not survive very well indoors. Because most probably die from dehydration after a few weeks indoors, they are not often seen in the winter. In the fall, use sticky traps/glue boards in corners of the basement to passively catch spiders that really don't want to be inside.



Male wolf spider

Cluster Flies

Cluster fly larvae are internal parasites of earthworms. The large, sluggish flies crawl into cracks around windows and under siding.



Cluster fly (left) and face fly (right)

They seem to emerge during warm spells in the middle of the winter. Fly swatters work well for small infestations.

Face Flies

Face fly larvae feed on animal waste, which is why people who live in rural areas deal with face flies more often than city folk. After crawling into cracks and crevices, the adult flies emerge indoors during warm winter weather. These flies are attracted to natural or artificial light. Sticky fly traps, placed near windows or under lights may be useful in controlling face flies.

House Mouse

The main reason mice enter buildings in the fall is to stay warm. The house mouse has a very fast metabolism and must eat constantly when it is cold to maintain their body temperature. Begin trapping as soon as you notice evidence of mice. Place snap traps near locations where you have seen droppings. Mice are attracted to kitchens, where there is food and warmth from appliances.



House mouse

These are a few of the most common fall-invading pests. If you find an unfamiliar pest, bring it to the extension office, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln (weekdays 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.) for identification and control recommendations.

Hands-On Termite Applicator Training, Sept. 25–26

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension's Community Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Team will offer a two-day, in-depth training for entry-level termite applicators, home inspectors, regulators and other interested persons. This two-day program will take place Sept. 25–26 from 8 a.m.–5:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln.

Presenters will represent UNL Extension, Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) and pest control industry personnel (UnivarUSA, Bayer Crop Science, Dow AgroSciences, BASF, FMC and Whitmire Micro-Gen). UNL presenters include Dennis Ferraro, Clyde Ogg, Barb Ogg and Shripat Kamble.

This two-day training will include both classroom presentations and hands-on demonstrations of a termite-infested house in Clatonia, Nebraska. Topics will include termite biology, termiticide calculations,



termiticide effectiveness and soil dispersion, baiting systems and Nebraska regulations. Participants will have an opportunity to perform perimeter, sub-slab applications and inspect a home for termites. They will also learn how to choose, maintain and calibrate termiticide equipment.

Pest control professionals who are licensed to apply termite treatments can become recertified by attending this NDA-approved training.

Early registration fee before Sept. 7 is \$300. After Sept. 7, fee is \$325. Registration includes lunches, breaks and reference materials. For more information, contact Barb Ogg (402) 441-7180.

Head Lice Alert!

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We've had some recent frantic phone calls from parents about head lice.

Head lice cannot jump or fly. Researchers believe most infestations start from head-to-head contact. Girls are more likely to get head lice than boys, maybe because they tend to be more affectionate and huggy with friends. Girls with long hair are more likely to get lice than girls with short hair, because the lice can crawl up the hair when it hangs. Putting long hair in a ponytail can reduce chances of catching lice.

Lice are small. Adult lice are about 1/10-inch long, but immature lice are smaller. When you part the hair, look for very small, grayish-colored crawling insects close to the scalp.

Lice eggs are smaller than a pinhead and hard to see. Eggs are white when first laid, but turn brownish as they mature. Eggs are laid about 1/2-inch from the scalp, most frequently around the ears or at the nape of the neck. The glue that attached the eggs to the hair shaft hardens and is very resistant to removal. Products claiming to dissolve the glue or the eggs, do not work very well. There are no products which reliably kill the eggs.

Today's lice are increasingly resistant to the over-the-counter pyrethrin or pyrethroid products, which include Nix, Rid and store brand products.



To check for lice, part hair and look for very small, grayish-colored insects close to the scalp.

This means these products will probably not kill 100% of the lice. Surviving lice will reproduce and perpetuate the infestation. Diligent combing with a nit comb will remove nits, lice and be helpful in solving infestations.

One product which is effective against resistant lice is HairClean 1-2-3. Studies have shown this homeopathic product is very effective. It is a mixture of anise oil, ylang-ylang oil and coconut oil in an isopropyl alcohol carrier. It is most frequently found in health food stores, but can also be purchased from online vendors. Follow directions carefully, using the nit comb which comes with this product.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more pictures and additional information about lice, go to UNL Extension in Lancaster County Web site "Head Lice Resources You Can Trust" <http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest/lice>

Tiny Bugs with a Big Bite!

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During the late summer, small insects known as minute pirate bugs cause painful bites that seem out of proportion with their size.

The minute pirate bug is about 1/8-inch long, oval to triangular in shape, flattened and black with whitish markings on the back. Normally, they are predators and feed on insect eggs and small insects. They feed by impaling their prey with their short blunt beak and sucking the juices.

Minute pirate bugs are found throughout the summer in fields, woodlands, gardens and landscapes. In the late summer, they begin the unpleasant behavior of biting humans. They do not feed on blood or inject a venom or saliva.

People differ in their



Minute pirate bugs are about 1/8-inch long (shown highly magnified next to a penny)

response to pirate bug bites. Some people have no reaction to the bite, but others have bites that swell like a mosquito bite or turn red. Because the bite is noticeable and the pirate bug doesn't fly quickly, the victim is usually able to successfully smash the offending insect.

Control of minute pirate bugs is not practical. Repellents are generally not effective. You can protect yourself better by wearing dark clothing on warm days when minute pirate bugs are abundant, long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Avoid white or light-colored clothing.