

Bed Bug Workshop for Landlords and Property Managers, May 21

In the last five years, bed bug infestations have increased in Nebraska. They are especially problematic in multiple-family housing units. Once established, bed bugs can be hard to eradicate. If you are a landlord or property manager, you need to know how to deal with this important pest problem.

UNL Extension and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD) will present a workshop, "Bed Bugs: What You Need to Know" on Thursday, May 21 from 6:30–9:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Topics will include bed bug identification, biology and behavior and how to inspect a home or apartment for bed bugs. Presenters will also discuss bed bug management using chemical and non-chemical actions and review LLCHD regulations regarding bed bug and other insect infestations in rental properties.

Registration fee for this program is \$20. No preregistration is required. Presenters include:

- Annette Bredthauer, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
- Barb Ogg, UNL Extension Educator-Lancaster County
- Jim Bare, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department
- Clyde Ogg, UNL Pesticide Safety Education Program

This workshop is geared toward educating landlords and property managers about bed bugs, but anyone interested in this topic will find it educational. For more information about this workshop, contact Barb Ogg, 441-7180. A brochure detailing this program can be found at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/pest/news.shtml>

Bed Bugs

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where people sleep is a job best left to professionals, who have been trained in the safe use of pesticides and who will use products labeled for bed bug control in a manner given on the label.

What Can People Do If They Can't Afford a Professional?

All bedrooms need your focused attention given in the following steps. Bed bugs will also feed on pets, so areas where pets sleep or spend time need attention. *The key to getting rid of bed bugs is to be persistent. Get rid of clutter. Continue to inspect, vacuum and launder. You can get rid of bed bugs, but it is tough. This is why people hire a professional to help them.*

1. Inspect thoroughly for bed bugs. One study showed 85% of bed bugs are within 15 feet of the bed. Because bed bugs feed on sleeping people, usually at night; they will also infest futons, sofas, overstuffed chairs, especially if people sleep there. Bed bugs leave black spots or smears where they spend time. Look for these spots. Bed bugs will also be found behind pictures, on curtains, in curtain frames and other locations.
2. Use a vacuum cleaner to suck up all the bed bugs you find. Throw the vacuum cleaner bag away or freeze the bag overnight. Make sure you vacuum where carpet meets the wall.
3. Encase your mattress and box springs. This will prevent bed bugs from feeding on you. The Protect-A-Bed encasement has been shown to work best. These mattress encasements are expensive, costing about \$100 for both mattress and box springs, but still less than buying a new mattress/box springs. Most mattresses today don't have many places for bed bugs to hide, but box springs are likely to contain large numbers of bed bugs. If you decide to buy a new mattress set, encase both mattress and box springs immediately.

4. Launder all your bedding and dry in a hot dryer. Items which cannot be laundered, can be dried in a hot dryer. Don't forget pillows.
5. If you have a headboard or other structure the bed sits on, these will almost certainly be infested with bed bugs. They will need to be treated in some way or discarded. To facilitate control efforts, remove them from the home and sleep on your encased mattress/box springs on a basic metal frame.
6. These actions will help from being bitten, but there will still be bed bugs living away from the bed. The next step is to move the bed away from the wall and other furniture so bed bugs can't crawl up the wall onto the mattress.
7. The final thing needed is to keep bed bugs from crawling up the legs of the bed. If you have skirting around the bed, remove it. Place the bed legs in containers and pour an inch of antifreeze in the bottom of the can. One researcher who did this, glued fabric to the outside of the paint can to make it easier for the bed bugs to climb the outside of the can. Bed bugs will fall into the antifreeze and drown.
8. Finally, you may wish to use an insecticidal product labeled for indoor use. Use it in areas away from the bed. Only treat locations listed on the label directions, including baseboards and the area where wall-to-wall carpet meets the wall or baseboard. Some sprays may stain or remove finish from furniture so be careful treating these areas. Don't worry about your mattress and box springs — you have already taken care of this by using the mattress encasements. Dusts can also be used to control bed bugs. Consider Eaton's® Bed Bug and Crawling Insect Dust, which is diatomaceous earth and safe to use. It works by desiccating insects (drying them out). It can be applied to cracks and crevices and void areas where bed bugs might be hiding. Note: It is important to read and follow label directions while using any pesticidal products.

Bird Watching

A Little Backyard Therapy

Soni Cochran
UNL Extension Associate

Are you looking for a little solace? Time to slow down and reflect. Take a step outside, stand still, close your eyes and listen. You'll hear them; wild birds. It doesn't matter where you live — in the middle of the city, the suburbs or in the country, birds are everywhere. In fact, it would be hard to imagine a world without birds.

Bird watching continues to be one of the fastest growing forms of outdoor recreation. Millions of people discover bird watching for the first time every year. Birds are fun and interesting to watch. They can be enjoyed by everyone. The pleasure of bird watching isn't limited by a person's age, physical and/or mental capabilities or economic situation. And, it is something you can start today.

Spring is a fascinating time to watch birds. Birds are migrating through this area. They may not stick around, but if you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse at some beautiful little warblers or a flock of Cedar Waxwings.

For beginning bird watchers, if you buy anything, start with a good field guide. Field guides are small, sturdy books designed to be carried with you. The Peterson Field guides, National Audubon Society and National Geographic Field Guides are examples. Go to your local library and browse the guides — it may help you decide which book you'd like to buy. Make sure you choose a book featuring birds found in your area. Keep an eye open at garage sales — you may find a used field guide at a very reasonable price.

Bird watchers quickly learn to hear birds before seeing them. You'll enjoy more birds if you can identify them by song or sound. You can purchase a bird songs on CD or use resources on the internet. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has a nice collection of bird identification resources, including their songs. Visit and use the site for free at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/>

At some point, you may decide binoculars will help you spot birds at a distance. When buying binoculars, cheaper is not necessarily better. Don't waste your money on the cheapest pair of binoculars. If you want to buy binoculars, do some research. Take your time and save for the best binoculars you can afford.

Start bird watching right around your

own home. Encourage a large variety of birds in your backyard by offering food, water, a place to build a nest and the right kinds of landscape plants.

Learn what native plants can be added to your landscape to help attract wildlife. Native plants provide protection, nesting sites and a food source for the birds. For help and ideas, check out the following NebGuides from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension:

- NebGuide 1572, "Landscape Plants for Wildlife." A list of plants that benefit songbirds and other wildlife in Nebraska. It includes photos, information about plants, their wildlife benefits and where they grow best.
- NebGuide 1571, "Backyard Wildlife Planting for Habitat: Planning and planting wildlife habitat in the backyard"

Water is always an important feature if you want to attract a variety of birds. You can purchase bird baths or make your own out of recycled materials around your home.

Bird houses and shelves should be placed outdoors by now, but it's not too late if you still have a bird house you want to use. Wrens and other birds are still picking out their nesting sites.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The free NebGuides described above are available at the extension office and online at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/pest/birds.shtml> — the Web site also features additional information on attracting birds, bird identification links and much more.

Bird Watching Trips

You don't have to go far to find bird watching sites right here in Nebraska. There are dozens of locations right around Lancaster County. Make bird watching part of your family's summer vacation plans. Take a trip through Nebraska and check out the diversity of birds in this state. Encourage your children to keep a log, draw birds they see or take photos for the family to enjoy later. For bird watching trails and locations in Nebraska, go to <http://www.nebraskabirdingtrails.com>

And remember, we can bird watch as we walk to our cars, schools or scurry about our daily lives. Every day, just take a moment...listen and enjoy!

Watch for Hummingbirds

The ruby-throat hummingbird migration in Nebraska peaks about May 5–17 and Sept. 2–18. Their northward migration may occur from April to June and then southward, from August to early October. Some lucky Lancaster County bird watchers enjoy hummingbirds at their feeders all summer.

Early in the season, these feisty little birds are very territorial. They won't share a large feeder. If you want to feed hummingbirds, put out several small feeders for the little birds.

Spread the feeders throughout your yard to reduce competition. You can always put out a larger feeder depending on how quickly the birds empty a small feeder.

Make Your Own Hummingbird Nectar for Your Feeders

Recipe: Mix one part granulated white sugar (common table variety) with four parts water. For example, mix 1/4 cup sugar with one cup water. Boil the water, dissolve the sugar and allow to cool before filling feeders. You don't need to add red food dye to the water.

Keep leftover "nectar" refrigerated. Change the mix in your feeders every few days, more often in hot weather. Be sure to clean the feeder each time before refilling to prevent harmful molds.

