

PEST FACT SHEET

American Cockroach

Periplaneta americana (L.)

Size

American Cockroach adults are about 34-45mm long.

Characteristics

A cockroach is oval in outline, with body flattened, antennae long and threadlike, head mostly hidden, chewing mouthparts, front wings leathery with veins. American cockroach: both sexes fully winged; wings of male (but not female) extend beyond tip of abdomen; poor to moderate flier.

Color

Dark Reddish brown



Habitat Area

Warm, humid places. The American cockroach may be found in residential buildings, but is far more common in food storage and food preparation areas, basements, and steam tunnels of large commercial buildings, such as restaurants, markets, hospitals, food processing plants.

Food Habit

Cockroaches will eat practically anything from human food to leather, wallpaper and even other cockroaches.

Biology

The female drops her egg capsule or uses a substance from her mouth to glue it to the surface of a crevice that is near a source of food. She does this an average of about 9-10 times during her life. Each egg capsule contains about 14-16 eggs. Development from egg to adult at room temperature takes about 20 months, and 10-13 molts. Adult females live about 15 months, or half that time if the temperature rises to the mid 80s F.

Damage

Cockroaches present one of the most significant public health risks, carrying diseases such as dysentery, gastroenteritis, diarrhoea, typhoid, poliomyelitis and salmonella.

Invasion

American cockroaches may enter buildings in packaging, or come up through sewer drains, or in a mass, from other structures or dumps, during warm weather.

Detection & Management

1. Inspect areas with flashlight to determine exact location of breeding.
2. Sanitation and preventive measures to prevent breeding.
3. Gel baits treatment at dry areas and spraying pesticides in wet areas.