

Other Common Pests

Information and control advice



Garden ants:

Garden ants can be either black or red and usually nest outside in lawns, flowerbeds and beneath paving stones, but may also become established in the foundations of properties. They will occasionally invade your home where they are attracted to your foodstuffs, especially sweet substances. A trail of ants will often be seen carrying food back to their nest. Although a nuisance garden ants are NOT a health hazard although the red ones have been known to bite. Each summer the new queens and fertile males swarm on the wing and mate. This lasts usually only for a few days after which the males die and the queens return to the ground to found new colonies.

Control:

1. Seal obvious faults in the structure using mortar or mastic to prevent further access.
2. Use suitable products cleared for use indoors.
3. Find the nest, try to trace the train of ants back to the nest and apply insecticides directly to it. This should only be done in conjunction with the methods indicated above as frequently the nest will be inaccessible, in the foundations under slabs etc.

It is advisable to purchase a crawling insect spray; there are many products on the market

ALWAYS FOLLOW THE MANUFACTURERS INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE AND APPLICATION RATES.

Powder - use this on the outside of the property to dust the points through which the ants may be gaining access. The areas to treat are gaps around windows and doors, air vents and pipes. Pay particular attention to even the smallest of cracks. You could also put a line of powder at the base of external walls, although this is likely to need regular renewing. You can also use the powder indoors, but only where people are not going to come into direct contact with it for example behind bath panels under the floor boards etc.

Spray - Use this indoors to treat the areas where the ants have been seen. Spray the gaps between the skirting boards and floor in each room; you can then lightly spray the remaining floor if necessary. Pay particular attention also to pipes access points and around windows, external doors and sinks. Food cupboards can be sprayed, but must be dry to the touch prior to returning food. All loose or packaged foods should be placed in airtight containers before they are returned to the treated areas (this will also prevent contamination by the ants)

Earwigs:



Are usually found outside living in cracks and crevices, under stones and bark and in foliage. They feed at night on plant matter, other small insects and mites. They are not a health hazard, they do not attack people or clothing and it is absolutely nonsense that they get into people's ears to lay their eggs.

However, due to climatic changes outside (too dry, damp or cold), they can sometimes be found indoors in large numbers.

Control:

1. Cut back any vegetation growing close to exterior walls, doors and windows.
2. Carry out treatment as for ants (see overleaf).

Woodlice:



Woodlice are usually found in damp places where they feed mainly on plant matter. They usually only enter the home in very small number and pose no problems. If the invasion is large it is usually an indication of dampness in or under the home.

Control:

1. Ensure rooms are kept dry and well ventilated. Clear any blocked external air bricks to allow air to circulate under the property.
2. Treat as for ants.

Silverfish:



Not strictly a garden insect, they are more often found in properties, sometimes in large numbers. By day they hide beneath loose floor coverings, behind wallpaper, skirting boards, bath panels etc. They emerge to forage for food at night. They are not a health risk but can cause damage to papers, fine textiles and leather. They can also invade packets of dried foods which are stored in damp cupboards.

Control:

1. Try to control the humidity/dampness in the property.
2. Treatment is only necessary indoors (as for ants) concentrate on areas where they may hide during the day.

Ladybirds:



These are not a health risk but have been known to bite. They sometimes lay eggs in old timber frames etc. Treatment is not usually necessary, but they can be treated in the same way as ants.

Slugs & snails:

These will sometimes invade the property from damp cellars or under floor areas. They are harmless but can leave unsightly trails.

Control:

1. Cut back foliage against exterior walls etc.
2. Use slug pellets outside where necessary.
3. Apply insecticides as for ants.