

PEST CONTROL DEPARTMENT

WOODLICE

Adult woodlice are between 2.5 to 18mm long, slate grey in appearance, and have 7 pairs of legs. They are crustaceans (being closely related to crabs and lobsters) that have evolved from the sea and successfully colonised the land and are unable therefore to survive dry conditions.

Woodlice are principally a nuisance pest; they do not bite humans or damage building structures.

Woodlice avoid light and are active by night, feeding mainly on dead or decaying plant material.

By day, they are usually found hiding under stones, plant debris or damp wood. In autumn however they can be found entering dwellings through air vents or under doors in search of shelter for the winter.

LIFE CYCLE

Fertilised eggs are laid in a brood pouch underneath the female's body where they hatch and develop.

After about 3 weeks incubation, the young (resembling smaller versions of the adults) are then released and undergo successive moults before reaching adult. In the UK Woodlice breed during the summer months only, producing between 6-200 young in a season and have a life span of between 1-4yrs.

CONTROL MEASURES

Large populations of Woodlice can occur where daytime shelter is plentiful.

Removal of harborages such as decaying pieces of wood (particularly in the sub floor space of a dwelling) and plant debris away from the house is essential if overall control is to be achieved.

A barrier treatment using insecticide spray or dust could be carried out externally to the walls of the dwelling paying particular attention to the cracks and crevices between paving slabs and the external walls of the house, around steps, air vents and damp areas surrounding the structure.

Always take great care when using insecticides. **Always follow the manufacturers instructions.**

Do not place insecticides where children or animals may come into contact with them. Wash hands immediately after use.

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