



COMMAND PEST CONTROL

Information sheet number 46 - Biscuit beetle



Appearance:

The adult insect is 2-4 mm, reddish brown, its head is tucked below the thorax, it has a loose three-segmented club antennae, the wing covers are finely ridged. The body is covered in very fine short yellowish hairs. Larvae are white with a yellow head and the body is fleshy and curved. This beetle is very similar in appearance to the Cigarette or tobacco beetle and the Furniture Beetle.

Breeding:

20-100 eggs are laid in the food material, they hatch in 1-2 weeks and the larvae at that time are only 0.5 of a mm. Larvae chew their way through the foodstuff and any packaging making tiny holes, they have 4 moults as larvae until full grown at 5 mm, this takes up to 5 months. The cocoon is formed in the food material and is covered with tiny food particles. The adult beetle hatches after about 2 weeks. It leaves the pupal cocoon after about 8 days. The life cycle is completed in approx. 200 days at 17°C, but in 70 days at 28°C. Adults live for 6-8 weeks and do not feed.

Food:

Biscuits, pet food, cereals, biscuits, old dried dough, breakfast cereals, spices herbs, flour, bread, cake mixes, nuts, dried fruits and seeds. It has been reported in curry powder and drugs. Sometimes it is found in birds nests and can infest homes through light fittings, via cracks & crevices and can be seen in large numbers on window sills attracted to natural UV light.

Where do Biscuit beetles live?

Often reported in bakeries especially in bread coolers and slicing plant, warehouses, restaurant and hotel stockrooms, it is also a pantry pest and often found in stored food samples in labs and test kitchens. Look on window sills.

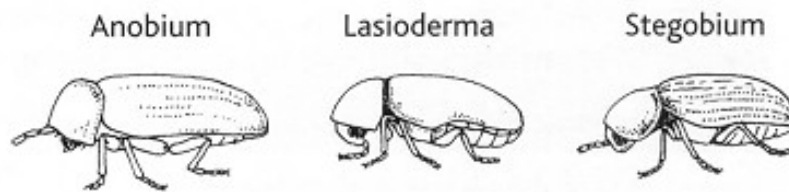
Damage:

The insects boring sometimes damage books and papers in storage. The larvae have been known to penetrate tin foil.

For more advice and control recommendations contact us on 01787 248049

All of these three related beetles can vary greatly in size and can easily be confused. Sometimes the furniture beetle can be dwarfed but they tend to be darker in colour in general but colour can vary as well. Often the habitat where they are found and expert identification can be the only way to determine the species.

A) Furniture beetle B) Cigarette beetle C) Biscuit beetle



A) Very helmet-like looking thorax obscuring the head

B) Less pronounced thorax - redder in colour

C) Biscuit beetle has punctured wing cases