



## COMMAND PEST CONTROL

### Information sheet number 23 - The Varied Carpet Beetle



#### **Appearance:**

Larvae known as woolly bears and are 3-4mm long, are squat, brown in colour. The larvae are segmented and hairy with 3 bunches of golden hairs on the tip of the body. They tend to shun light. Adults are 1.5-4mm long and the body is of a variegated pattern with a dense covering of scales. The patterns are variable but they are usually pale brown, yellow, and straw, marbled.

#### **Breeding:**

12-100 eggs, which are 0.5 mm long and are cream in colour. They hatch after 10 days at 30°C. These are laid in the breeding material over a two-week period in the summer. The larvae hatch after 2-4 weeks and the larvae feed till winter when they will sometimes hibernate if it is too cold. They resume feeding in the spring, pupate in February or March. When full grown they are 4-5mm long and normally moult 6-15 times. Pupation is within the last larval skin and usually lasts for 10-30 days. The adults emerge in March and are active throughout the summer. Late summer and autumn the females will enter buildings to lay eggs. Adults live for 2-6 weeks.

#### **Food:**

Keratin which is found in hair, fur or feathers. It is often found in stored cereals and dry vegetable products. The larvae are very resistant to starvation and will survive for long periods.

#### **Where do Varied carpet beetles live?**

The adult insect often enters houses in the spring when it flies through open windows. They commonly infest bird nests and sometimes can be found on packaging in warehousing. They will attack carpets usually in areas behind or under furniture which is seldom moved or is too heavy to move. Clothes in wardrobes and cupboards are frequently damaged.

#### **Damage:**

They will attack wool based carpets and will ignore man made fibres. They may infest stuffed animals and skins causing much damage.

**For more advice and control recommendations contact us on 01787 248049**