

Bed Bugs
(*Cimex lectularius*)

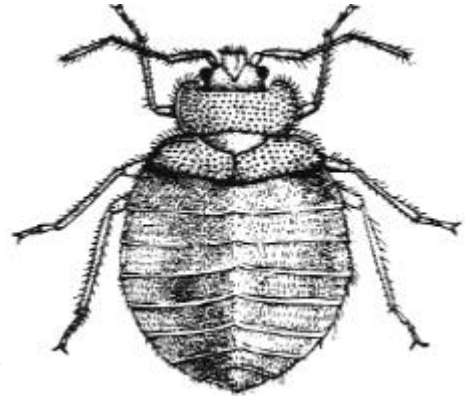
Hemiptera: Cimicidae

SIZE: 1/4 to 3/8 inch (4-5 mm)

COLOR: Reddish brown or brown

SHAPE: A mature bed bug is oval-bodied, wingless and flattened top to bottom.

DESCRIPTION: Bed bugs are small wingless insects that feed solely upon the blood of warm-blooded animals. They are sometimes mistaken for ticks or cockroaches. Bed bugs are sometimes called "red coats," "chinchies," or "mahogany flats."



HABITAT: At the beginning of an infestation, bed bugs are likely to be found only in the crevices in the bedsteads. In areas of heavy infestation bed bugs can be found in tufts, seams, and folds of mattresses and bed covers. Because certain cimicid species can live in bird nests, houses and buildings with several bird nests in the eaves and on the roof often will have these bugs coming into the living areas. Bat colonies also have bed bugs associated with them. Some species that are bird or bat ectoparasites will bite humans who come into contact with them.

LIFE CYCLE: The life cycle stages of a bed bug are egg, nymph, and adult. The females lay about 200 eggs, usually at the rate of three or four a day, in cracks and crevices in the floor or bed. Newly hatched bugs begin feeding immediately. They shed their skin five times before becoming adults.

TYPE OF DAMAGE: Bed bugs feed principally on human blood by piercing the skin with a long beak and sucking blood into their stomachs. They feed mostly at night, but will feed during the day if hungry and the light is dim.

CONTROL: Find all the areas that bed bugs hide in during the day time. These must be treated with chemicals applied by a licensed pest control applicator. In hotels, apartments, and other multiple-type dwelling places, bed bugs may spread from one unit to another. All units should be inspected. Remove bird nests to eliminate bird biting species. Eliminate bat infestations to get rid of bat biting species.



INTERESTING FACTS: Bed bugs are able to go without feeding for 80 to 140 days; older stages can survive longer without feeding than younger ones. Adults have survived without food for as long as 550 days. A bed bug can take six times its weight in blood, and feeding can take 3 to 10 minutes. Adults live about 10 months and there can be up to 3 to 4 generations of bed bugs per year.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

University of Kentucky Entomology, <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Entomology/entfacts/struct/ef636.htm>

The Ohio State University Extension Office
<http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/2105.html>

University of California IPM Online
<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7454.html>

CDC – Emerging Infectious Diseases
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/vol11no04/04-1126.htm>

CDC – Environmental Health Services
<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/topics/bedbugs.htm>

