



# CLOSE TO HOME

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Nature's Way



Spiders for Lunch!



Ladybugs for Play!

# Beneficial Pests



Like jumbo shrimp, a contradiction. Two words that just don't seem to fit. But it is true. Most "pests" have a good side.

Termites and carpenter ants, long the arch enemy of people living in wood houses, benefit nature by removing fallen wood rotting in the forests. It must be what Robert Frost was thinking when he wrote the poem, "The Wood Pile". He finds an old wood pile in the wild, abandoned, left "to warm the frozen swamp as best it could with the slow smokeless burning of decay."

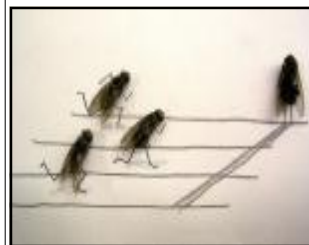
No one needs pointers on the benefits honeybees bring to us. Spread a little honey on some buttered toast for a reminder. Farmers rely on pollination honey bees bring for their crops.

Lady bugs (for those that have forgotten our last newsletter) from Asia were originally brought in to combat aphid damage to pecan crops

in the south. Despite their growing numbers to pest status, they serve a good purpose in the garden.

Different cultures have a regular diet of insects, most a delicacy. We haven't yet turned that corner in the west. But for a people that eat hot-dogs as a national staple, can insects be considered a step down??

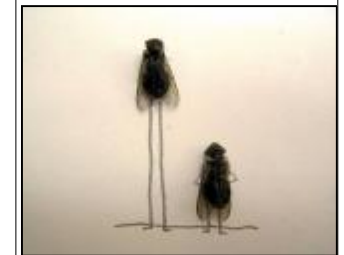
Now for some fun. Insects can make us laugh. It only takes an imaginative mind, some dead cluster flies, and lots of time. Captions: mine; Artwork: Anonymous.



"Lane two in the Lead"



At the Beach



"Pheromones, I think."

Despite these efforts to paint a bright side to real problems, you may need an exterminator one day. Remember Castleguard. We deliver service with a smile!



## THE PEST INSPECTOR'S JOURNAL!

THE ODD - THE SCARY - THE HUMOROUS

A customer called recently asking if I could come over and find the dead rodent that was causing a smell through the house. Though this house did not have a history of mouse problems, I thought I should check it out.

The smell originated in the basement and was carried up through the heating ducts. When I arrived, I knew the smell was not from a decaying rodent. It had an electrical smell of some sort.

As I got near to the electri-

cal panel, the smell was strong, and the panel door was warm to touch. I recommended an electrical evaluation.

The culprit? A 50 amp breaker for the furnace burned out. No heat either!



# Slaying Dragons!



Pest Management through the eyes of a child.

One of my greatest joys is interacting with children in my work. They are, of all people, the most interested in what I am doing. They don't fully understand the process, but they really want to know.

One young boy was so mesmerized with my flashlight, his parents bought him one of his own which he goes to bed with every night! Others look forward to my visit because I am the one who gets rid of the spiders.

One such visit occurred recently . As I

entered the house, a little girl came running to greet me with the picture above. This was beautiful art so I inquired if the person pictured was her. She said, "No, that is you, and you are killing a spider!" I thanked her and was very touched my work inspired her drawing.

I also noticed the size of the spider—larger than me! And the many, many legs on it—about twice as many as I am used to. Yet, I was quite sure she had seen a spider this big with this many legs somewhere in

her travels. She was happy to see me. She didn't know how I did it, but I was the hero. No more spiders.

It made me realize my work sometimes goes beyond the parameters of typical pest coverage. I go after those scary things in the basement, the attic, and under the bed; You know, where monsters live.

My little friend with the new flashlight asked his mother: "What he doin'?" She said, "getting rid of the dragons."



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94 Jefferson Ave., Fairport, NY 14450 P:585-381-0395 [www.fraysierhome.com](http://www.fraysierhome.com)



## YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED HERE!

**Q:** Something has eaten a hole through the back of my dishwasher. Can you come over and see what it is?

**A:** I sure can. I had never heard of such a thing, but assumed that a rat had gotten inside and done the damage. When I arrived at the property, I found out the issue was in a third floor apartment, and no one else in the house had any problems.

Sure enough, inside the one month old dishwasher was a hole the size of a softball. We pulled out the dishwasher and found a hole through insulation in the back wall, that led to a hole in an eave where a squirrel had gotten in. Not only was the dishwasher ruined, but the electrical supply wire was gnawed leaving exposed copper wiring! Based on my knowledge of electricity, I doubt the squirrel will be back. . .

The solution? Patch the hole in the back wall and eave with hardware cloth. Make sure the squirrel is out first!



**Q:** I have a dead rodent smell in my house. What can I do to get rid of it?

**A:** First of all, make sure what you smell is in fact from a dead rodent. Rodents take the blame for many foul smells in a house that are from other sources (see previous story on electrical problem).

When rodenticides are used in a home, we cannot control where the rodent ends up dying. However, finding dead rodents after an extermination is unusual; more common in heavy infestations.



### ASK JOHN!

If a suspicious smell lingers for more than a few days, check around the floor areas of the basement, and above ceiling tiles. Your nose can usually lead you to the right area!

Homes on septic systems can take on similar smells during times of heavy rain or snow melt. Sometimes the smells can be tracked down to a dry trap that is allowing

sewer gases into the home.

If it is from a dead rodent, it will dissipate in two weeks. Still, better dead than alive!



**Q:** We had a bad nest of Yellow Jackets last summer. Can you come out and remove the nest before they come back?

**A:** I am always happy to be of service, but if they were yellow jackets, the nest is dead and they don't return to it in the Spring.

But you may want to seal any obvious openings where they were coming in. Pheromones left behind from last year may attract a female to nest nearby.

