



CLOSE TO HOME

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Time To Run</i>	1
<i>Pest Inspector's Journal</i>	1
<i>Trouble Below</i>	2
<i>Fungus Gnats</i>	2

Spring Has Returned!



The Earth is like a child that knows poems.

Ranier Maria Rilke

Swarmers of Spring



Carpenter Ants

Termites



Honey Bees

Time To Run!



70 Degrees!

There is something magical about this number in April. It's almost as though the Town Crier for the insect world can be heard loud and clear: **WAKE UP AND RUN!** And run they do. Some will also fly away in the warm sunshine.

The warm temperature changes insects metabolic rate and they begin frantically searching for food, and a mate.

Let's look at a few of these springtime visitors.

Carpenter Ants

One of the most common signs of spring, right up there with the return of the robin, are black ants in the house. They may be nesting in the house, or in a tree nearby, but their presence in the kitchen is usually fueled by their ravenous appetite, having eaten very little for the past six months. They love most kinds

of foods we do, but especially sweets like honey, sugar, syrups and sodas. They are known for getting into pill bottles and eating the sugar coating off the pill!

It may be food that brought them in, but it could be a good nesting site that keeps them there. Don't let these wood borers get a foothold!

Termites

It rained all morning. You could smell the earth taking it all in. The sun came out about 1:00 PM and the first semi-humid day of the year was upon us. As you go to put the laundry in the dryer, you notice flying "ants" in a basement window. Upon closer inspection, they aren't ants at all. They are termites. (Pictured lower left, page 1). Their very long wings and a lack of pinched waists (Like ants) distinguish them. Time to have a professional take a look.

Termites usually swarm in

April in western New York. It all depends on the weather; seventy degrees and humid are the key ingredients. The winged stage of the termite are the reproductives that will pair off to form new colonies. Their presence is always a sign of a bigger problem in the house.



Silverfish

Silverfish can be active all year in the home, as can carpenter ants and termites. But it is in the spring and summer they can be found in abundance. Silverfish like hot temperatures. 70 Degrees outside translates to 90 degrees plus on the roof and attic. It is under shingles, roof sheathing, and below attic insulation you'll find the cozy home of the silverfish.



THE PEST INSPECTOR'S JOURNAL!

THE ODD - THE SCARY - THE HUMOROUS

The Cave Beneath

Home inspections often take me to places where homeowners don't go. Such was the case recently when I was conducting an inspection in Canandaigua. A basement window was the only visual

access into a crawl space below most of the house. In the distance, a strong flashlight lit up an interesting find. Where the floor joists were only 6" from the dirt floor, termite mud tunnels extended from the soil to the wood like stalactites!





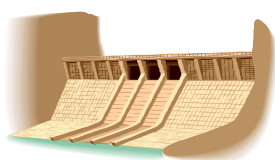
IN THE NEWS



Don't Drive your Chevy On the Levee!

For years experts have known that termites can destabilize levees by eating cellulose products within them. It is believed that levee failures during Hurricane Katrina were due in part to termites eating cellulose based spacers in concrete levees. Termites were found in over 70% of the spacers inspected following the storm. In earthen levees, plant matter that was used as filler in levee construction was eaten by termites causing weakening and undermining. For the full story go to:

www.louisianafloods.org



TERMITES AND RATS

Troubles Below!

Rats in NYC

A fast food restaurant in New York City recently made national news when dozens of past customers stopped by the storefront to witness scores of rats running over equipment and tables. The store was closed indefinitely for the problem to be addressed. The restaurant chain hired urban pest management expert, Dr. Robert Corrigan, to evaluate their practices and resolve the problem. It is estimated that several million rats live beneath the concrete jungle of NYC! See the news video on the web:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=su0U37



Fraysier Home Inspections

CastleGuard Pest Management



94 Jefferson Ave., Fairport, NY 14450 P:585-381-0395 www.fraysierhome.com

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED HERE!

Q: We recently had a home inspection where the inspector mentioned the Federal Pacific electric panel should be replaced. Why is this?

A: Federal Pacific made a "Stab-Lok" panel that has had a history of problems. This is all well documented in letters that are compiled on the internet. A search will bring up a wealth of information on the topic.

In short, tests have found Stab-Lok breakers to fail in tripping as often as 60% of the time. It is estimated that failure in other breakers is closer to .01% of the time.

Simply changing the breakers to another brand is not an adequate fix, as there are other issues in the panel contributing to failure.

Federal Pacific Stab-Lok panels should be replaced where they are in service.

This is a safety issue that can cause electrical shock and fire.

Q: Cornell has identified a sample insect from my house as a Fungus Gnat. I have discarded all plants from my house. Where can they be coming from?



A: Fungus Gnats, pictured here are a common pest inside the home. You

were right to start with you plants first. They usually breed in the damp soil and root structures of house plants. Plant stores have materials that can be sprayed in the soil to help control them.

Fungus Gnats will also breed in other locations. They prefer damp wood so could be found near leaks in plumbing or in the roof. Especially vulnerable are flat roofs that



ASK JOHN!

tend to hold water. If it is warm enough outside, they will breed under leaves and mulch next to the house. Additionally, always check sump areas and floor drains in the basement. Sludge can collect in these locations and provide food for the larvae.

Q: Every Spring when the weather turns warm we have wasps flying around our eaves. What can be done?



A: Paper Wasps are probably the most common stinging pest

we run into in our area. The fertile females leave their summer nests to winter over under tree bark, leaf piles, under siding, and in attics. The first day in Spring that reaches 70 degrees, they fly again in search of a good nesting location. They will often nest in similar areas from the previous year, being attracted by a pheromone scent left at the old nest site. However, new nests are built each spring. And it all starts with a fertile egg she carries from last summer!

Later April and May are good months to have exterior treatments done to prevent wasp nesting through the summer. Nipping the problem in May can prevent a painful sting in July!