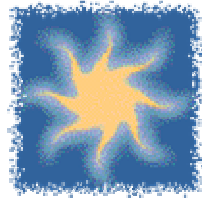




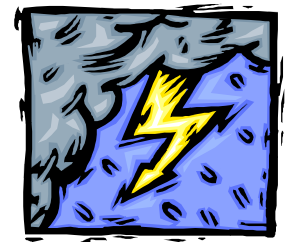
CLOSE TO HOME

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Spring Memories</i>	1
<i>Termites or Carpenter Ants?</i>	1
<i>Basement Water</i>	2
<i>Disclosure Statements</i>	2



Memories Of Spring



“The Bluebird carries the sky on his back.”

Henry David Thoreau



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Bluebirds and Carpenter ants. Both are reminders of Spring. One good, one bad. One has inspired poets, the other has inspired exterminators.

Carpenter ants are the most common insect pest of Spring months in western New York. For many, they are nothing more than an occasional nuisance. For others, their numbers can be such that food is thrown out, sleep is lost, and mild hallucinations occur!

Carpenter ants are arguably the most common wood destroying insect in western New York. Their nests in tree trunks are riddled with trails, caverns, and sawdust. It is the discovery we all have made when cutting a large tree in the yard.

It's when carpenter ants move from the tree to the house that the problem becomes personal. Exterior walls, window frames, damp roofs, toilet bases, are all

excellent locations for carpenter ants in search of a place to raise their young. That's when trails, caverns, and sawdust can show up in the house structure. The house is nothing more than a heated tree to the ant!

The picture below shows carpenter ant damage to a piece of pine molding.



And such good food your house has! Carpenter ants run in search of sweets once they come out of winter dormancy. They will find it in tree sap, honeydew from aphids,

and other plant secretions. But it is much easier to find in the kitchen cupboards. Sweet cereals, sugar bowls, honey, empty beverage cans, and spillage in the dishwasher are all favorites for the hungry carpenter ant.



Ants on Peonies

Spring memories should come from pictures of the Bluebird, not the damaged wood.

Professional treatments are recommended to protect against carpenter ant invasion. Call **CastleGuard** today to get started.



THE PEST INSPECTOR'S JOURNAL!

THE ODD - THE SCARY - THE HUMOROUS

I recently did a pest inspection where I found evidence of termites in the garage. I recommended treatment. The seller called his "pest expert" in for a quote. He found no evidence of termites, only old carpenter ant damage that did not need treatment.

I was called back in to show the "pest expert" what I had found. He had misidentified termite damage as old carpenter ant damage and missed other key evidence of termite activity.

Had this not happened to a

leading pest control company that specializes in termite control, I may have let it go.

It makes a difference who does the inspection. **Call experience!**



Diagnosing: Wet Basements



The House: Six year old colonial with a partially finished basement. The front corner has a damp wall with drips of water coming off the wall insulation. Roof gutters drain into underground drains. What are the possible causes of this water problem?

1. **Roof Water:** Make certain all gutters/downspouts are clear and running. Even new houses need maintenance!
2. **Exterior Grading:** Soil should slope away from house at least 1" per foot for six feet. Settlement often occurs here with new houses.
3. **Hose Spigots:** Sometimes problems stem from a leaky spigot.
4. **Main Water Line:** If the water problem is in the vicinity of the main water entry, there may be a leak in that pipe.

Solution: After checking each of these possibilities, weep holes can be drilled into hollow block voids to relieve hydrostatic pressure.



Fraysier Home Inspections

CastleGuard Pest Management



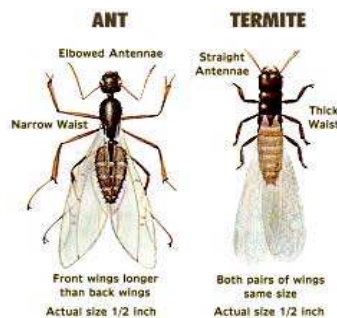
94 Jefferson Ave., Fairport, NY 14450 P:585-381-0395 www.fraysierhome.com

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED HERE!

Q: I have found what look to be flying ants in my house. Could they be termites? How can I tell the difference between ants and termites?

A: This question comes up every Spring. Flying insects like these are common. For both ants and termites, the winged stage are called "reproductives". They are the individuals that will pair off and start new colonies, the future king and queens. When weather conditions are just right, the reproductives emerge from the colony in a swarm with several hundred others.

The easiest way to distinguish ants from termites is in the body shape. Ants will always have 3 distinct body parts; head, thorax, abdomen that are clearly seen. Termites have a much more uniform body shape, lacking the pinched waists of ants.



This drawing should help to see the difference.

Q: I am considering the purchase of a house in an area of the county that has termites, according to your termite map. How reliable are disclosure statements regarding pest infestations?

A: That question is probably better answered by a realtor, but I will give it a shot. The intent of the disclosure statement is to disclose any problems that the house has, or



ASK JOHN!

has had. When it comes to wood destroying pests like termites and carpenter ants, many people are unaware of the serious hazard these pests are to a house. Many will not equate black ants in the spring with a serious hazard, though it may be. Others may consider that "rotten" spot in the basement as caused by spring rains, not termites.

In a few instances I have

done pest inspections, found termite evidence, and found nothing on the disclosure statements about termites despite the sellers knowing of the problem.

The moral to the story is to have a pest inspection done before you buy the house. Disclosure statements are not the final word on wood destroying insects in the place you may call home for the next twenty years.



Hidden termite damage in basement window frame.