



MEMBER  
NATIONAL  
PEST CONTROL  
ASSOCIATION  
HEADED BY AN ENTOMOLOGIST

MARCH/APRIL 2009  
Vol. 21 No. 2

## The Pest Bulletin

PRSR STD  
US Postage  
PAID  
PERMIT NO 496  
Berkeley, CA

**McKINZIE PEST CONTROL**  
A McKINZIE INC. COMPANY

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# Here Come the Pests Again!

Pests have been less active outdoors, but that always changes as the weather starts to warm. As pests wander about outdoors searching for food, water, shelter, mates, and places to lay eggs, many will find their way into homes. *They don't care that you haven't invited them!* For these pests, even the smallest cracks and crevices are like big inviting "bug doorways" for them.

Fortunately we can stop them in their tracks and help prevent pests from invading with our professionally applied perimeter treatments. These treatments are applied around the foundation of your home and in other key areas. They are

especially effective at stopping crawling pests from invading your home—*halting pest problems before they begin.* Our perimeter treatments stop invasions of pests like ants, earwigs, crickets, centipedes, and many, many others.

Keeping these pests out is important not only because they can be a major annoyance and embarrassment, but for other significant reasons as well. Invading pests can leave odors and stains, droppings and dead insect bodies, and webs, plus contaminate human and pet



food, and some can cause allergies or bite and sting. In fact, every year in this country about a *half million* people are stung by bees, wasps, ants, spiders, and scorpions.

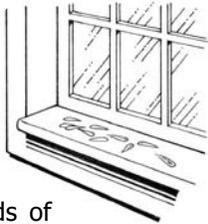
Yes, you can be sure pests will return! But our expert perimeter treatments are just one of the tools we have in our arsenal that helps our customers enjoy a more comfortable life with fewer pests and pest-related problems.

## Green Pest Prevention Tip of the Month

To help keep ants out of your kitchen, here are two things you can do in addition to our regular treatments: 1) Once a package has been opened, store the food in containers with tight lids or in the refrigerator; and 2) clean up crumbs and spills and empty the kitchen garbage daily

## Watch for Termite Swarmers

One way homeowners discover they have termites is when they find winged reproductive termites, called swarmers. During swarming season, hundreds or even thousands of termites with wings make a mass exodus out of the colony and take to the air. Usually this happens after a rain as the temperatures begin to warm and the days lengthen, but it can happen at other times as well.

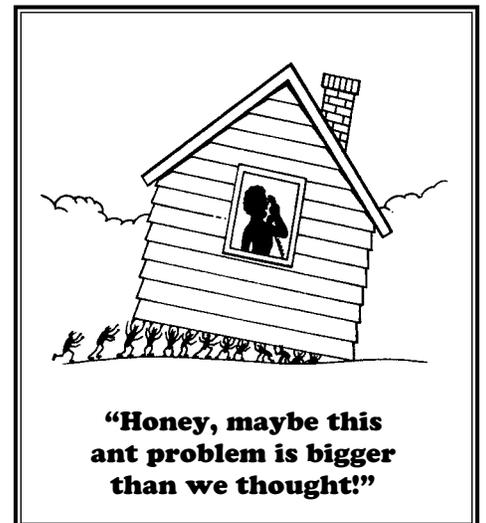


Once these termites emerge from their nest, they begin flying, but since they are weak fliers they are mostly carried wherever the wind blows them. They quickly pair up, pry off their wings, and retreat to a cozy dark place where they mate and start a new colony. Swarmers that emerge indoors are attracted to bright lights and are often found around windows and lights. Finding termites or their wings indoors is

almost always a sign that the house is infested and being eaten by termites.

Termites in periods of low rainfall are less likely to swarm. In those cases they often go deeper into the ground, waiting for more favorable conditions. Also, only mature colonies produce swarmers. So you may not see swarmers or other signs of termites, but still have termites from one or more colonies eating away at your home. A professional inspection is the best way to determine if your home is being slowly destroyed by termites.

Call us if you haven't had a recent inspection, or if you find swarmers or other signs of termites, so we can schedule a professional inspection. Finding infestations early and eliminating them before they do further damage can save you hundreds to thousands of dollars.



Thank you for your business and referrals!

## Foreclosed Homes Create Pest Problems



Vacant or poorly maintained properties can be a breeding place for a number of pests, and unfortunately these pests often end up invading other homes in the neighborhood.

Foreclosed homes sometimes become so overgrown with weeds that they turn into ideal breeding sites for *rats*, *mice*, *ticks*, *wild animals*, and other pests. Stinging insects like *wasps* and *bees* also frequently become problems around these properties because they are not controlled early in the season as they would be in an occupied property.

Vacant properties can also become breeding places for huge numbers of biting *mosquitoes*. These pests breed wherever water sits for seven days or longer, including neglected bird baths, swimming pools, ponds, whirlpools, and backed-up roof gutters.

If you know about a badly neglected property near you, notify the local health department. Also let us know, because we may need to take additional protective measures to prevent these pests from invading your property.

## Serotonin & 'Locust Gangs'



Serotonin is a brain chemical linked to positive moods in people. Higher levels of this chemical, in proper balance, can produce a greater sense of well-being, as well as improve appetites, sleep, and even enhance memory and learning.

But in locusts, high serotonin levels are not desirable. According to new research reported in the journal *Science*, serotonin levels affect whether a locust lives a mostly solitary life, or becomes gregarious and joins up with other locusts to form 'gangs'—huge destructive swarms. The scientists found that swarming locusts have *three times* the amount of serotonin levels in their system as solitary locusts, and that they won't swarm if serotonin is blocked.

Locust swarms, consisting of millions to hundreds of millions of individuals, are known to devour every plant and crop in their path. Last year one devastating locust swarm in Australia was nearly four miles long.

It is hoped that this new information will lead to ways to prevent locusts from swarming.

## Your Questions Answered

**Q.** Are bird strikes of aircraft common?

**A.** Over the last 17 years, the FAA reports bird strikes have caused 43 planes and helicopters (commercial and private) to crash in this country. But the actual number of bird strikes is much higher and has gone up in recent years, from 1,738 in 1990 to 7,439 in 2007. This dangerous trend is due to both an increase in the number of birds in urban environments and an increase in commercial air travel. Most of the strikes occur at low altitude during takeoffs, climbs and landings.

Airports spend millions of dollars each year trying to prevent bird strikes similar to what happened to Flight 1459 that landed on the Hudson River in January. In this case it was Canadian geese that downed the airplane; but many different birds have hit planes, including pigeons, crows, and even raptors like kestrels.

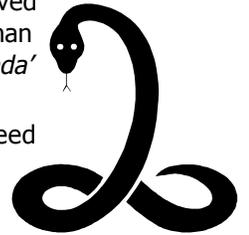
The battle to keep birds away from the air and land around airports is continuous. Airports employ a variety of methods to discourage birds, including installing nets across ponds to prevent bird landing, trapping and relocating birds, setting off explosive shells to scare them off, and using lasers to shine a green light near the birds, which mimics a predator stalking them. In addition, Sea-Tac Airport in Seattle has installed powerful new avian radar that track birds within six miles of the airport and up to 3,000 feet. Other airports are slated to receive similar bird radar systems this year.



## Monster Snake Discovered

Scientists in Columbia have unearthed the remains of the largest snake ever discovered—a prehistoric monster that weighed more than 2,500 pounds and was almost 45 feet long. The snake lived about 60 million years ago, and was 5 feet longer than the special-effects-created snake in the movie *'Anaconda'* that tried to eat Jennifer Lopez.

Snakes are cold-blooded, which means they need heat from the environment to power their metabolism. The largest snakes today live in warmer, tropical areas. Larger snakes need more warmth, and scientists believe that for a snake of this size to survive, the temperatures must have been about 10 degrees warmer than they are today.



## Louse Combs Help Detect Lice

New research shows that using a louse comb is the best way to detect a head louse infestation. Examination of hair with a louse comb is *four times more effective* than direct visual examination, and *two times faster* than examination by hand.

Most louse combs are two-sided; one side is used to untangle knots in the hair; the other side has finer teeth that trap lice and their eggs, and is especially useful for detecting a louse infestation.

**Tip:** Metal louse combs work much better than plastic louse combs. Regular combs do not work because the teeth are too far apart.