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CONQUISTADOR

PEST & TERMITE, INC.



October / November 2008

The Wet Summer Brought Lots of Spiders

Our successful monsoon season has produced large numbers of termites, crickets, ants, flying insects of all kinds, and spiders. In my 29 years of providing pest control services to my fellow Tucsonans, I have never witnessed such an infestation of spiders. Most species of spiders are nontoxic and beneficial; they help control the bug population around our homes. The Orb Spider, Wolf Spider, and ever popular Tarantula always gets attention. These spider species—ranging from colorful, fast, and large, respectively—can be intimidating to see in action but are actually harmless to people.

This season I am concerned about the Black Widow Spider. This species is by far the most notorious because of its toxic venom. Her bite can be dangerous, so if bitten call Poison Control right away for advice and consider a trip to urgent care. I have found more Black Widows this summer than ever before, and we have not seen the peak season yet (fall is the time of year when we see more evidence of them). They prefer dark, quiet places to build their webs, such as garages, storage sheds, under bushes, in meter boxes or any kind of box, etc. When working in these areas, always wear gloves and be very cautious placing your arms and hands into places you can't see.

I find the fact that people fear the spider more than any other pest very interesting. Most are not dangerous, some are quite colorful, and yet the majority of us find them creepy and very uncomfortable. I guess movies depicting giant spiders attacking and invading us have not added to their appeal!

Thanks again for your continued patronage, and please feel free to call with any questions or concerns.

Ken Fredrick

Critter Corner

Tucson is home to a wide variety of spiders. Most are harmless, and all are beneficial in that they help keep down the insect population. Spiders are not insects; they are arachnids, having 8 legs and only 2 body sections (abdomen and "cephelothorax"). All spiders can spin silk fibers, though some build no webs at all. The silk may be used for wrapping prey (spiders are carnivorous), lining burrows, travel, or in the case of the trap door spider, as a hinge. Spiders spin webs to trap or filter insect prey from the air, or ensnare passing insects as they attempt to walk over the web. A number of spiders are themselves camouflaged to resemble plant parts or ants to allow themselves to get close enough to seize unsuspecting insects. Some spiders are active hunters, chasing down food or jumping on it. Outdoors, spiders are fascinating and important parts of the environment. It is when they come indoors that they become a problem.

All spiders can bite and all spiders are venomous. It is the venom that allows them to subdue prey that is larger and stronger than they are. Spiders do not eat solid food, and many of the spiders have strong enzymes in their venom that literally liquefy and pre-digest flesh. The Brown Spiders (including the Brown Recluse) fall into this category. The damage caused by a single bite can have crippling effects on humans. The other type of spider venom is neurotoxin as found in Black Widow spiders. These poisons can cause severe pain at the site of the bite, and can cause paralysis and serious systemic reactions. The best solution is to keep spiders out of the home. This is best accomplished by eliminating their food. When cockroaches, crickets, moths and flies are controlled, spiders are rarely a problem. Your Conquistador Technician is trained to look for conditions that might attract spiders or their prey. Be sure to follow his recommendations to reduce pest and spider harborage.

WANTED

YOUR WEED PROBLEM

Now is the best time to begin pre-emergent spraying for summer weeds, since it is not effective once a seedling has fully sprouted. Ask your Conquistador technician about pre-emergent spraying.

Additionally, with Conquistador Pest & Termite's **CONQUER ALL** program, you get with each visit:

Weed maintenance

Pest control

Termite inspection of house exterior

Termite infestation treatment, as needed

In addition:

Pre-emergent applied in January and July

Annual interior inspection

A warranty on all of our work

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