



It's Really Going Places.

Best Management Practices

Crickets

Background: Crickets are an occasional invader that can become a general nuisance pest and cause considerable damage when they invade a home. The house cricket, *Acheta domesticus*, the field cricket, *Gryllus spp.*, and the camel cricket, *Ceuthophilus spp.*, are the most common species invading homes. Cricket chirping is an annoyance to many home owners and may create many sleepless nights. Crickets that get inside the home will feed on cloth and paper products and any uncontained food. Enormous numbers of crickets congregate around lights at night, making roads slick and public places and yards unattractive.

Description: House and field crickets are common everywhere. These crickets are omnivorous, feeding readily on various foods and are particularly attracted to sweetened beverages and beer. The eggs are laid in the fall, usually in moist sandy soil, and hatch the following spring. House crickets are 3/4 to 1 inch long, light yellowish brown with three darker brown bands on its head and long thin antennae. Field crickets are 1/2 to 1 1/4 inches long and black in color. Field crickets are generally more robust and louder than house crickets. Both of these crickets are attracted to warmth and are often attracted to the vicinity of the fireplace, kitchen, furnace, water heater, or basement. They conceal themselves in cracks and crevices, such as behind baseboards, and may burrow into the mortar in walls. During warm weather the house cricket lives outdoors in fields, piles of debris, rocks, lumber, and garbage dumps. With the coming of cold weather, crickets enter the home seeking warmth. House crickets are nocturnal and attracted to light. Once inside the home these insects may attach to a variety of materials made from nylon, wood, cotton, wool, silk, or linen. They particularly enjoy clothing stained with perspiration or food.

The camel cricket is very different than house or field crickets. Although they are 1/2 to 1 1/2 inches long, they do not chirp and are excellent jumpers. Instead of being attracted to warmth, these crickets prefer cool moist places. They typically invade homes during hot dry weather or in the fall when seeking a place to overwinter. They are often found in crawl spaces and attics above two-story homes. They will also invade the living space and, because they are nocturnal, can give homeowners a great start after turning on the lights of a darkened room when these great leapers take off.

Management: As with most pests, it is critical to understand the behavior of the insect when determining the best course of action to control the pest. Removing harborage near the structure is the first step towards controlling cricket infestations. Reducing outdoor lighting near points of entry or using yellow lights can also reduce cricket pressure. Perimeter control, when used with exclusion methods, can eliminate the need for most indoor treatments. Most house and field crickets enter the the home from surrounding flower beds, mulched areas, or lawns. Apply TalstarOne™ multi-insecticide at a rate of 1/2-1 oz/1000 sq ft to a 6-10 ft wide band around the structure. Pay special attention to foundations, window wells, crawlspace vents, weep holes, areas around garbage cans, and around doorways which may require special treatment. When treating flower beds, it is important to be sure that the treatment penetrates deep into the plant or mulch to maximize effectiveness. Timing of application is important because field and house crickets generally infest the structure in the fall when temperatures cool, while camel crickets tend to enter the structure during the warm dry summer.

If crickets have entered the structure, it is important to select the correct product to treat the infestation. Dusts should be used in voids, beneath baseboards in crawlspaces, and attics where access is a problem. Sprayables are preferred for spot treatments as these applications can stay on the surface and are readily picked up by the insect. Apply TalstarOne™ multi-insecticide at a rate of 1/2-1 oz/gallon as a spot treatment.

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