



It's Really Going Places.

Best Management Practices

Occasional Invaders: Millipedes, Centipedes, Sowbugs and Pillbugs

Background: The term “occasional invaders” includes those pests that may occur in buildings at some stage in their life cycle but which do not usually complete the entire life cycle within the structure. Most of these pests live outside of buildings but may come inside, usually after an increase to epidemic proportions. Buildings are generally entered by chance while the pests are looking for harborage, water, or food. Although they may enter in large numbers, they usually do little damage and are a nuisance because of their presence. Millipedes, centipedes, sowbugs and pillbugs are all occasional invaders.

Description: Centipedes have multiple body segments with 1 pair of legs per segment, and may reach 3 inches long. They are grayish-tan with long antennae and extremely long legs. When disturbed by light, they move very quickly. They prefer moist environments and feed on other small insects such as roaches and houseflies. They are really beneficial insects, and unless they become extremely abundant they should not be killed.

Millipedes are somewhat similar to centipedes except that they have 2 pairs of legs per body segment and their legs are very short. Their bodies are typically round and their antennae are short. They generally feed on decaying vegetable matter and tend to be found in mulch beds. They tend to move into homes through doorways and in house plants that are brought inside.

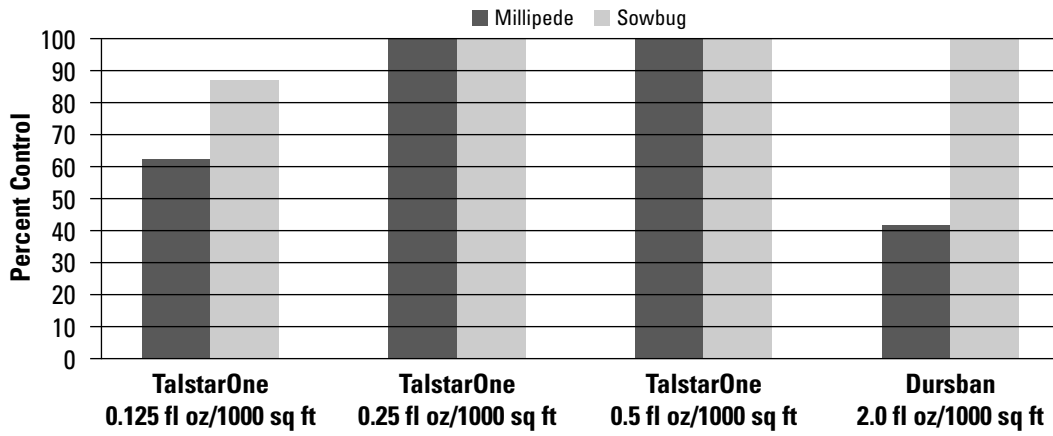
Sowbugs and pillbugs are not insects but are more closely related to crayfish. They have round, slate-gray colored bodies with distinct segmentation and seven pairs of legs. Both can roll up into a ball shape. They tend to feed on decaying plant material and plant roots and are often found in mulch beds or compost heaps. They may move into homes via house plants that are brought inside.

Management: For occasional invaders it is best to focus on exterior treatment unless remedial action inside the structure is necessary. Remove favorable habitat, dry out moist areas, and remove clutter and debris in the yard. Clean out mulch beds and remove decomposing vegetable materials. Fill voids and entrance ways to prevent reinfestation. Sticky traps in the garage or near entry points may be helpful.

For centipedes, it's usually not necessary to treat unless their populations become extremely high. In such a case, apply TalstarOne™ multi-insecticide using a 0.033% suspension (0.5 oz/gallon) to damp areas, such as under sinks, where centipedes and their prey are likely to hide.

For millipedes, sowbugs and pillbugs treat the perimeter of the house with TalstarOne™ multi-insecticide using a 0.033% suspension (0.5 oz/gallon) along a 3-4 foot area above the foundation. In addition, treat a band of soil, turf, and vegetation 6-10 feet wide around the building with TalstarOne™ at a rate of 1 oz/1000 sq ft or Talstar® EZ or PL granular insecticide/miticide at a rate of 2.3 lb/1000 sq ft.

TalstarOne™ Multi-Insecticide Millipede and Sowbug Control



Trials Conducted by Dr. Rick Brandenburg;
North Carolina State University

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