

Spiders & Earwigs

Spiders

A few years ago, some 80,000 school children were surveyed about the animals they disliked. Spiders finished second only to snakes. There are probably 500 to 600 species of spiders in Michigan. A few of them dwell in structures. Many inhabit your backyard and may stray into your home.



Spider Bites

Spiders are predators. They rely on two poisonous fangs, called chelicera, to subdue their prey. Of the 35,000 identified species in the world, ONLY ONE is known to be aggressive toward humans. (Not to worry, it's in Australia.)



Occasionally, we get a spider between a body part and the wall or a piece of clothing and we get bitten. How a person reacts to the venom varies from person to person, physiology to physiology. Some people swell and discolor, while most people respond as if bitten by a mosquito. If your reaction seems to be severe, see a physician immediately.

If you have a thriving community of spiders in your home, you must have a bounty of prey there. Spiders are predators and wouldn't hang around unless they were getting their three square meals a day. Get rid of the prey, get rid of the tiger. Sanitation is the long-term key.

Earwigs

Earwigs are part of a complex of insects that are primarily scavengers. They feed on dead plant and animal material, as well as greenery such as flowers and garden plants. They will also feed on whatever live critters they can capture. They are active primarily at night and may be attracted to light. They are commonly found entering the household in the summertime. During the day, they can be found outdoors congregating under loose bark, under decks, in mulched flower beds and in other similar debris.



Identification

The pincher-like appendages at the end of the abdomen make the earwig very recognizable. Earwigs are a dark reddish brown and about 5/8 inch long. Males have larger pinchers than females.

Integrated Earwig Management

As we move thru summer, earwigs will likely begin appearing in the household. The probability will increase if you have mulched areas near entrances and have an attached wooden deck. Moist summers tend to favor higher populations.

Earwigs do not cause damage inside. Occasionally people have reported being pinched or bitten- they are never sure which. Dispose of earwigs as you would any other nuisance, non-damaging household pest. We recommend flyswatters or vacuums that can be emptied outside, for the squeamish. Seal cracks and crevices to deny entry, especially around door and window frames.