

Pest Profile



Photo credit: Daniel D. Dye II

Common Name: Asian cockroach

Scientific Name: *Blattella asahinai*

Order and Family: Blattodea: Blattellidae

Size and Appearance:

The Asian cockroach bears a strong resemblance to both the German cockroach, *Blattella germanica*, and the field cockroach, *Blattella vaga*. The Asian cockroach can be easily differentiated from the field cockroach as it lacks the dark stripe found in between the eyes of the field cockroach. Distinguishing the Asian cockroach from the German cockroach by morphological traits is much more difficult. Methods including DNA analysis can be performed when species identification must be certain. In most cases, however, the two species can be distinguished by behavior.

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	Ootheca 5.8 – 9.0 mm	Ootheca are yellowish-brown, and usually two-toned, with one end paler than the other. They are more than twice as long as they are wide. Each ootheca contains about 38 eggs.
Larva/Nymph		The nymphs of Asian cockroaches are smaller than those of German cockroaches, and they are pale along the margins of the abdomen.
Adult	13 – 16 mm	The adults are winged and will readily fly. This is a common method used to help distinguish it from the German cockroach. The pronotum has two dark longitudinal stripes. They are generally ashy grey in color.
Pupa (if applicable)		N/A

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.):

The nymphal stages and adults have chewing mouthparts.

Host/s:

Asian cockroaches are omnivorous scavengers. They have been observed feeding on organic debris, plants, dead insects, honeydew from aphids, and more.

Description of Damage:

Asian cockroaches are most active in the evening, around dusk. They are attracted to light (unlike German cockroaches which generally are negatively phototrophic). They may enter structures and become a nuisance, landing on lamp shades, lightened walls, and televisions. However, they usually do not become established indoors. Outdoors, populations can build up significantly and they can become a pest when conditions are favorable, such as in weedy vegetation, thick grass or an accumulation of leaf litter.

They have been found feeding on agricultural crops including lettuce, cabbage, and strawberries, but they are not known to cause significant damage. In nurseries, they can be a pest of roses and other plants, harboring in potted plants. They can also be a problem in the citrus industry through their feeding on young foliage, becoming a sanitary concern in packaging and processing facilities when brought in with the picked fruit. Conversely, they may be a benefit around soybeans, where they feed on lepidopteran eggs.

References:

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