

Pest Profile



Photo credit: By Jim Kalisch, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Common Name: American Cockroach

Scientific Name: *Periplaneta Americana* (Linnaeus)

Order and Family: Blattodea: Blattidae

Size and Appearance: Adult American Roaches range in size from about 34-53 mm in length, reddish-brown in color, and a yellow band along pronotum. Both sexes have a full pair of wings though they are not strong fliers. Nymphs are grayish-brown and resemble adults without wings. Egg case (oothecal) is reddish brown and contains 8 eggs on each side.

| | Length (mm) | Appearance |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Egg | 5.8-9 mm | Dark reddish-brown with 8 eggs on each side. Deposits in a crevice with both a food source and high humidity. |
| Larva/Nymph | 9.5-50 mm in length depending on instar | Lighter shade of brown than adults with a gray tinge. Narrower body, no wings present. |
| Adult | 34-53 mm long | Reddish-brown in color with a yellow band along the pronotum. Full set of wings present on both sexes. |
| Pupa (if applicable) | N/A | |

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

Host /s: American Roaches feed on a wide variety of food sources with a strong preference shown towards fermenting products. Cheese, beer, bakery items, wine, leather are all foods desired and consumed by the roaches.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Roaches are almost exclusively a nuisance pest. They tend to be more of a problem near large commercial buildings such as restaurants, factories, storage facilities, etc. They are able to enter through basements, cracks in doorways, etc. Proper prevention techniques go far in keeping roaches out of undesired areas. When high infestation of food products occurs, gastroenteritis related diseases can be easily transferred due to movement on food sources by roaches. Cockroach excrement and cast skins have also been known to cause allergic reactions in sensitive individuals.

References:

Smith, E.H. and Whitman, R.C. (2007). Cockroaches-American Cockroach. In *NPMA Field Guide of Structural Pests*. (4.1.1). National Pest Management Association International.

Jacobs, S. (March 2002). American Cockroaches. Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, Department of Entomology. Retrieved on July 27th, 2016 from <http://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/american-cockroaches>