

Field Cricket

(Grylls bimaculatus)



Appearance

Large body (up to 25mm); male shiny and black and female dark brown. Both sexes with 2 yellow shoulder patches. Males create an intermitted chirp or in correct terms “stridulate”. This sound is produced by rubbing their wings together

Feeding Patterns

Tunnels are clearly visible. They feed around tunnel inlets at night and newer growth is most commonly attacked.

Damage

Disfiguring tunnels causes damage to lawns and playing surfaces. Damage is especially noticeable during drier periods. Lawn loses its density during heavy infestation

Control

Tunnels must be treated using the 7 L pump action sprayer In cases of extreme infestation a cover spray can be applied to the entire area using the boom spray

House Cricket

(Acheta domesticus)



The common name comes from the fact that house crickets are often found in houses where they can survive indefinitely.

Appearance

Adults are 16-22 mm long and their colour is light yellowish brown with three dark cross bands on the head. Antenna are threadlike and longer than the body. The wings lay flat on the back. The cerci are long and feeler like. The adult female has a long tube like ovipositor for laying eggs. Nymphs look like adults but are much smaller and lack wings and an ovipositor in the case of females.

Biology

Outdoors the overwintering eggs hatch in late spring and adults appear in the late summer with only one generation per year. Females can lay up to 728 eggs. The nymphs go through 7-8 instars which require between 53-56 days. Indoors the female can lay between 40-170 eggs at room temperature. The eggs are placed individually in crevices such as behind skirting and in other dark places.

Habits

During warm weather the house cricket will live outside in garbage dump type areas and with colder weather will move indoors. These crickets are nocturnal and are active at night.

They make their presence known by "chirping" which is done by rubbing their front wings together. This sound is made to attract females. Outside they are often attracted to lights.

Damage

House crickets usually surface feed, leaving the surface roughened from pulling or picking fibres loose while feeding and making large holes in fabric.

Control

Cricket control starts outside with the reduction or elimination of moist harbourage areas near the structure by mowing lawns, weeding plant beds and removing wood piles.

They are attracted by light so change outside light bulbs to less attractive yellow bulbs or sodium vapour lamps. Microencapsulated products and wettable powders can be used very effectively. Crack and crevice applications must also be done to their hiding places.

Mole Cricket

(Gryllotalpidae)



Appearance

Cylindrical body (up to 30mm) which is light brown and furry. It has massive front legs adapted for burrowing with short front wings with massive hind wings adapted for flying. The tips of hind wings stick out like spikes.

Males stridulate to produce an uninterrupted buzzing sound which is produced by rubbing the files on their fore wings together. Massive burrows of up to one metre deep

Feeding Patterns

Larvae and adults feed essentially on plant roots. These pests seem more profuse and their damage more evident on waterlogged lawns. They are mostly accompanied by earth worms. Soil feels spongy under foot

Damage

Grass loses its density; root system is destroyed and can lead to the demise of the affected areas of the lawn. Once larger infestations are manifested, complete destruction of the lawn is possible

Sound that males create can become irritating to home owners Dogs are predisposed to digging into a lawn in chase of the sounds generated by these pesky insects.

Control

Mole Cricket control starts outside with the reduction or elimination of moist harbourage areas near the structure by mowing lawns, weeding plant beds and removing wood piles.

They are attracted by light so change outside light bulbs to less attractive yellow bulbs or sodium vapour lamps. Microencapsulated products and wettable powders can be used very effectively. Crack and crevice applications must also be done to their hiding places.