DEANS SERVICES Buzz

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A Creeping In the Cold

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Winter in Florida brings a welcomed break from the harsh heat, the summer rains, and even some pests. But while most pests migrate or hibernate for the winter, some adapt by seeking out warmth – which often leads them to our homes!

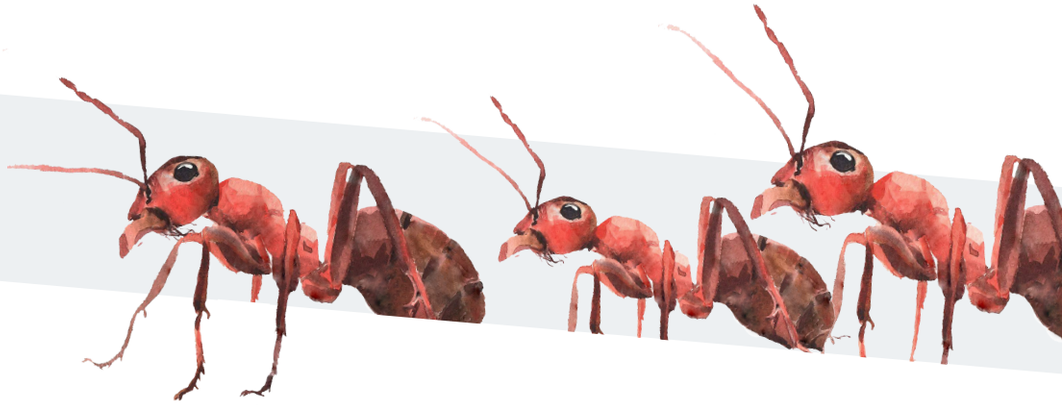
Here's a list of pests that may try cozying up this winter, and how you can stop them.

Silverfish

Silverfish can reproduce quickly and, unlike other insects, can live for years! All the while they'll feed on paper-based products like books and documents, and even food in your pantry.

Silverfish require humidity to survive. By using a dehumidifier to drop the humidity below 40%, will dramatically reduce their ability to survive. Setting a few glue-traps will also stop these scaley scoundrels.

Ants



Ants patrol landscaping which can lead them to tiny cracks in the home. Trailing pipes in search of moisture, they'll often discover the kitchen, where even the tiniest crumbs will fuel their colony within your walls.

End their march by sealing external cracks around pipes and trimming bushes at least 10" away from your home.

Boxelder Bugs

These true bugs are closely related to bedbugs; but don't worry, their hosts of choice are your plants. They gather in late fall and often seek warm attics or living spaces while to wait out the chilly winter.

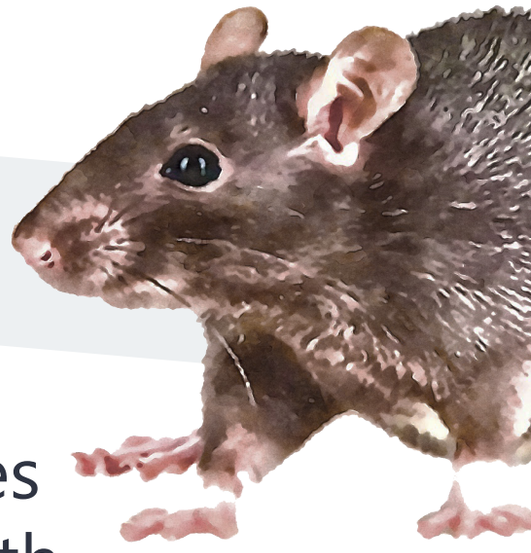
The best defense is to check and seal roof-line gaps. Fortunately, boxelder bugs don't reproduce once inside. Should you notice a cluster of these insects, simply vacuum up the straggling invaders.

Roaches

While German roaches live inside year-round, Australians and American roaches (often called “Palmetto bugs”) prefer the great outdoors. But when temperatures drop, they’re quick to camp inside. These large roaches are especially attracted to garages where they hide in cardboard and clutter.

Guard your garage by replacing any old weather stripping, removing clutter, and replacing carboard with plastic totes.

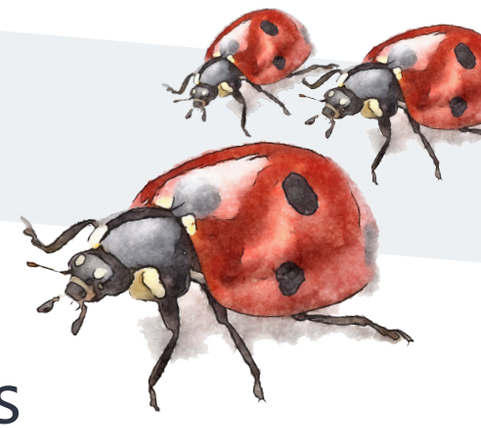
Rats & Mice



Rodents are attracted to homes all year-round, but attic warmth makes their attraction increase during the winter. Once inside, their chewing can cause fires, and their droppings contribute to unsanitary conditions and disease.

By trimming trees away from the roof and sealing holes around the foundation of your home, you’ll restrict rats from climbing or burrowing. Replace garage weather strip-ping if you notice gnaw marks and call a professional if you should hear scratching noises in your attic.

Ladybugs



Ladybugs are beneficial insects, but with the depletion of aphids (their primary food source) during the winter, they'll go into a state of dormancy inside – often clustering in ceiling corners.

Because ladybugs are beneficial insects, we recommend gathering the stowaways in a dustpan and simply releasing them on a warm day. But if you're not ready to accommodate, a vacuum will do the trick.

Termites

Termites will tunnel deeper during winter to regulate their col-ony temperature, but once they infest your home, their year-round feeding will not stop.

Of all the pests we've listed, termites are by far the most difficult to control, and – due to the risk involved – we highly recommend hiring a professional. Termites emerge toward the end of winter, leaving behind wings and thousands of swarmers. If you notice these inside, call Deans right away to schedule a thorough inspection.

All these pests have one thing in common – they're all preventable. By starting a termite and pest control program before problems arise, you'll stop issues before they incur serious damage. When Deans protects your home, you can also be sure to spend the winter – and *all* your seasons – pest-free!

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ULTRASONIC PEST CONTROL

A Sound Alternative?

MADELINE PAGAN, MARKET ADMINISTRATOR

If you've ever seen sonic pest repellant devices, you may have wondered if they could truly solve all your pest problems without needing to spray, swat, or squish. The claim is that ultrasonic frequencies — unheard by humans — will deter the pests. But how exactly this would work is never clearly presented. Let's consider the science.

According to the University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, studies conducted on ants, German roaches, mosquitoes, and rodents revealed that ultrasonic devices produced little to no effect on deterring pests. In fact, some devices were actually shown to *attract* pests such as mosquitoes.

The best case for these repellants was on the rats and mice, where a "mild aversion" was observed – but even that limited effect dwindled in time. Another point of consideration was the long-term affect devices may have on cats and dogs, which are able to detect the high pitch frequencies.

Research indicates pests remain unaffected, or simply adapt to ultrasonic frequency devices.

The journal did note that sound isn't out of the question for pest control, having shown positive outcomes with beetles using a specific geese sound.

For centuries, sounds have been used to scare pests away, especially if the sound is a known predator of the target. For now though, the science doesn't support the efficacy of these products. If you didn't find success with such a device, consider Deans Pest Control to protect your home. Our methods are proven to be effective at keeping you safe...and sound!

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