

There are commonly three types of cockroaches in the U.K. The more common German Cockroach (*Blatella germanica*), the Oriental Cockroach (*Blatella orientalis linneaus*) and the American cockroach (*Periplaneta americana*). The two most commonly found are the German and Oriental Cockroach with the latter being the bigger by some way.



Biology

The oriental cockroach pictured above in all its stages both male and female with juveniles of various ages along with its ootheca (egg case). In contrast to the German cockroach the oriental cockroach drops her ootheca and this is a good way of telling the two apart along with their different sizes and colour. The young of the oriental take roughly up to 18 months to become sexually mature adults in which they go through several different moulting stages to get there. The adult oriental cockroach can grow up to 30mm long is reddish brown living on average six months and is winged but cannot fly. They can climb rough surfaces and may reach upper floors this way.

Behaviour and habit

The oriental cockroach seems to prefer warm indoor environments and thrives in moist conditions, kitchens and boiler surroundings a favourite but unlike the German cockroach can survive winter outside if protected from the elements. They are not normally active in the day depending on conditions but emerge in the dwindling light to feed and drink and since they need a water source for drinking, they mostly hide in and around wet areas.

They are omnivorous and will feed on any sort of organic material but unlike the German cockroach do very much prefer starchy and sugary protein rich foods. Their breeding conditions vary to the German cockroach in that they can breed quite happily down to 10°C.

Signs of infestation

The most common signs of infestations are actually seeing cockroaches themselves; other signs are droppings, urine and their actual smell that is quite noticeable in heavy infestations. You may well see egg cases left after the female has deposited them.

Reasons for control

The cockroach is considered to be a pest due to its effect upon humans. One of these reasons is its ability to transmit disease to humans with its ability for economical damage to foodstuff being another. Many people find the mere sight of cockroaches revolting this alone can be a reason for control.

Cockroaches carry a number of diseases in and on them that can be harmful to people. They are passed to humans through its habit of walking over and feeding on putrefying waste materials and drinking at unclean water courses. After it has fed the cockroach then freely walks over food preparation areas, surfaces, cutlery and crockery along with foodstuff itself this enables it to spread disease.

Food loss is another reason for control with severe losses financially being taken every year in the food industry due to cockroaches. In these cockroaches are responsible for the contamination of products that can result in foodstuffs being a total loss. Clearly with this a factor there is a need for control.