

Insect Factsheet

Booklice (Psocids)



Identification:

1-6mm in length.

Small almost microscopic, pale translucent to yellow or grey in colour.

Booklice do not like the light, preferring to live in dark humid places such as the folds of packaging in food cupboards.

Psocids are a common but harmless household insect pest, they can live in dry powdery type foods such as flour, sugar and semolina etc. they can also be found in old books and papers in domestic and commercial properties.

Psocids feed on moulds, fungi, cereals, pollen, fragments of dead insects or other similar materials.

The most favourable environment for Psocids is one of high temperature and relative humidity, this could be caused by new plaster drying out, or could be due to condensation from not having enough ventilation in the property.

Biology:

The eggs are laid singly or in clusters and are often covered with a silken web. Most species pass through six nymphal stages. Time between egg and adult can range from 30 to 60 days, depending on the environment.

Control:

They are usually present in small numbers and go unnoticed. However, when conditions are favourable, and there is adequate food available, booklice can become numerous and a nuisance.

Try to deny the conditions they need to survive and multiply, adjusting the environment is the first step in controlling booklice.

Keep dry foodstuffs, cereals etc in a cool, dry, well ventilated place, remove infested food and dispose of outside.

If there are unnecessary collections of books or papers, remove them, especially if they are in the basement or other damp storage area.

If these methods fail to give adequate control, the use of a residual insecticide or aerosol insecticide or diatomaceous earth dust in areas where booklice have occurred will be effective.

Use biocides safely.

Always read the label and product information before use.