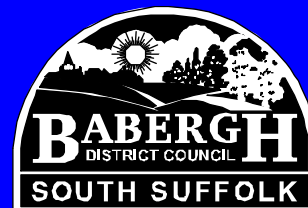


► For Further Information



The Natural & Built
Environment Division

► The Natural and Built Environment

Babergh District Council
Corks Lane
Hadleigh
Ipswich
IP7 6SJ

Other information leaflets available:

- Carpet, Museum & Fur Beetle Control
- Furniture Beetle (Woodworm) & Wharf Borer Control
- Cockroach Control
- Larder Beetle Control
- Spider Beetle Control
- Housefly Control
- Flea Control
- Biscuit Beetle Control
- Silverfish, Earwig, woodlouse & Slug Control
- Psocid (Booklouse) Control
- Seagull Control
- Pest Control Advice
- Rodent Control
- Feral Pigeon Control

► ADVICE TO HOUSEHOLDERS ON PSOCID (BOOKLOUSE) CONTROL

► Babergh District Council

www.babergh.gov.uk/babergh/pests

Updated Sept 2006



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www.babergh.gov.uk

This document can be made available on audio tape, in Braille, large print or an alternative language upon request by telephoning 01473 822801

▶ Advice to Householders on Psocid (Booklouse) Control

▶ CHARACTERISTICS

Psocids (Booklice) are minute creatures of between 1 and 2mm in length. They can be yellowish or greyish in colour, are soft bodied and the male is smaller than the female.



◀ Psocid

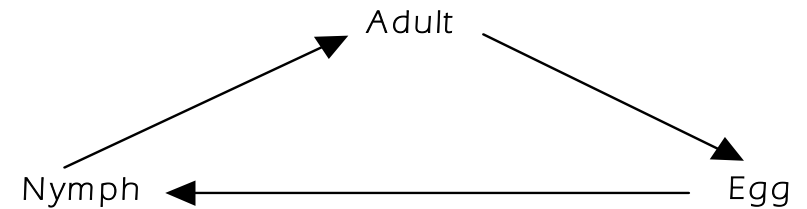
▶ BEHAVIOUR

Psocids are usually found in dry powdery foods. They are not caused by poor hygiene conditions and are just as likely to be found in the cleanest of new homes as they are in the older homes. They prefer to live in warm, dark, humid places such as the folds of packaging in food cupboards. They dislike any disturbance by light. Their diet needs to be rich in carbohydrates. They feed on a wide variety of dry food products such as flour and also on the microscopic moulds that develop in humid conditions, damp wallpaper, book-bindings and furniture.

▶ SIGNIFICANCE

From time to time people find that their food cupboards have become infested with tiny grey or yellow insects. These are often found on the packaging of dry foods such as flour, dried milk, sugar or semolina. It is natural, but usually incorrect, to assume that the products themselves are at fault. Research has shown that the particular species of psocids that cause problems in the home are rarely found where the foods are produced. Psocids prefer areas with a high humidity but can tolerate dry conditions for several days. The kitchen is the most likely place to provide the conditions they need for survival, and fitted cupboards provide the darkness, which attracts them. Moisture in the home can be caused by not having enough ventilation in the home. If psocids have warm, dark, moist conditions they can rapidly increase in number. This is most likely to occur during the summer months when temperatures are higher, however they are often not discovered until the autumn.

▶ LIFE CYCLE



The life cycle for the psocid is 'incomplete metamorphosis' and the nymphs can pass through up to eight nymphal stages before reaching adulthood. The insects generally live for up to 6 months during which time the female can lay up to 100 eggs.

▶ CONTROL MEASURES

It is best to keep all dry foods in cool larders or cupboards with ventilation. If this is not possible, make sure that your cupboards are always free from condensation and damp. If you notice that condensation is occurring in your kitchen, particularly during cooking or washing, open your windows to increase the ventilation. If the problem is continual then it may be necessary to take additional measures to reduce condensation such as improving the energy efficiency of your property.

Any knock down aerosol for crawling insects will kill the psocids, however it is imperative to dispose of all contaminated food stuffs into an external bin, prior to treatment, and to ensure that any other food stuffs are removed from the cupboard, and adequately protected from the risk of any contamination from the treatment that you are using. The cupboards should then be thoroughly cleaned by using a dry cloth or vacuum cleaner ensuring that the cupboard is completely dry prior to restocking it.

▶ KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Keep the kitchen and food storage cupboards well ventilated and dry
- Check your food cupboards regularly using the contents in strict rotation
- Store vulnerable dried foods in washable, covered containers, and ensure that they are properly clean and dried before refilling them
- Check the packaging prior to purchase to ensure that it is not damaged at all
- Check the food on opening to ensure that it is not infested with psocids.