

DRUGSTORE AND CIGARETTE BEETLES

Drugstore Beetle: Coleoptera: Anobiidae, *Stegobium paniceum*

Cigarette Beetle: Coleoptera: Anobiidae, *Lasioderma serricorne* (Fabricius)

By Eric Day

DESCRIPTION: Both are small reddish brown beetles. Both beetles have their heads pointing downward and backward to the point that the head is not always visible. They are both about 1/10 to 1/8 inch (2-3 mm) long and brown. The cigarette beetle has a shiny appearance. The drugstore beetle is similar to the cigarette beetle in appearance but is slightly larger, more elongate, and has distinctly grooved wing covers. The last three segments of the antennae are like a saw.

FOOD: Both beetles have a very wide host range and feed on many kinds of dried plant and animal material, including spices, flour, cereals, dog and cat food, tobacco, leather, wool, meal, seeds, and dried fruits. In addition, they will check through non-food material such as paper and fabric to get to a food source. They are said to feed "upon almost anything except cast iron."*

HABITAT: Anywhere around stored dried food and spices. These beetles often are found flying inside houses at lights and windows.

CONTROL: Control of this pantry pest begins with the location and removal of the infested food. A thorough clean up, using a vacuum cleaner to get into the cracks and crevices, will control this pest. Seal any remaining dried foods in airtight bags or containers. Infested food can be heat treated at 120 degrees Fahrenheit for 1 hour to kill these beetles. Foods that are susceptible to infestation can be stored in the freezer.



Cigarette Beetle, pupa, adult, larva. Clemson University - USDA Cooperative Extension Slide Series, Bugwood.org



Drugstore beetle, *Stegobium paniceum*, Pest and Diseases Image Library, Bugwood.org

INTERESTING FACTS: Its peculiar diet includes such odd materials as strychnine, rodent baits, and pyrethrin. These beetles do not bite or sting and are not poisonous if accidentally consumed.

*Biscuits, Bugs, & Broadides -- or --Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Hard Tack (but were afraid to ask) by Mark Hilliard