

# VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

**VIRGINIA  
TECH**

**VIRGINIA  
STATE**

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## COCKROACH CONTROL: WHAT'S NEW

There are a few new products available for homeowners to control indoor cockroach pests. There has been an addition to the traditional aerosol sprays for treating kitchen and bathroom areas. There is a product on the market that claims to be birth control for cockroaches! This material is incorporated into an aerosol that is used like others for cockroach control. This product contains an insect growth regulator for cockroaches, called hydroprene (commercial name is Gencor). A small amount of this material exposed to developing cockroaches (nymphs) will affect the cockroach once it becomes an adult. The adult cockroach will have twisted wings and be sterile. The chemical does not kill cockroaches! The material is active on only one or two stages during the nymph development. So, it is necessary to apply the material very thoroughly, so that as many of the nymphs will come in contact with the spray. In general, this insect growth regulator alone would probably not provide the control that is expected by homeowners, so it is usually combined with a traditional insecticide--that will give immediate knockdown and kill of some adults and nymphs.



## INSECT NOTES

There is at least one cockroach "bait station" on the market today; it is sold under the name Combat. There are 12 small, black plastic devices sold in a package. These are designed to allow German and brownbanded cockroaches to crawl inside and to have access to a small amount of insecticide laced bait. The cockroach will feed for a short time and leave to die outside the bait station. The stations are square, and rather small, and will fit easily into corners of cabinets in kitchens and bathrooms. The manufacturer suggests that they be replaced after three months. We have conducted some research with these bait stations--in Roanoke and Charlottesville Redevelopment and

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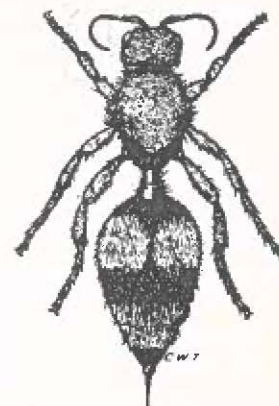
An Educational Service of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and Virginia State University, Virginia's Land-Grant Institutions, with U.S. Department of Agriculture and Local Governments Cooperating.

Housing Authorities. We found that they worked very well in controlling German cockroaches. We found that there was adequate bait remaining in the stations at the end of three months for an additional month or two! One package of these bait stations (they are not traps) provide good control of medium to low infestations of cockroaches. We found that more than one package of 12 stations may be necessary to control a heavy cockroach infestation. The significant advantage of these bait stations is that the homeowner is not put behind the button of a spray can--that means that insecticide will not be applied where it shouldn't be (counter tops!), and there will be no odor of pesticide in the home. Look for an increase in the number of companies that provide bait stations for cockroach control.

### VELVET ANTS

Velvet ants are medium-sized, red and black insects that resemble ants--but they are more closely related to wasps than to ants. The body of these insects are densely clothed with red and black hairs that give the insect a velvety appearance. The wingless females (males have wings, but are rarely seen) can inflict a nasty sting if handled, and they frequently make a squeaking noise when captured.

These insects are parasitic on wasps and bees. The female velvet ant invades a nest of wasps or bumble bees and lays eggs in the nest of the host. The velvet ant larvae kills and eats the host bee pupa. Velvet ants are beneficial!



### VIRGINIA TECH PEST CONTROL CONFERENCE - OCT. 29-31

The 38th Va Tech Pest Control Conference will be held on October 29-31 at the Hyatt Hotel in Richmond. This two and one-half day conference is designed to provide pest control operators, sanitarians, public health and corrections professionals with the update training necessary to provide safe and effective insect and rodent control. The conference is approved by the Va Dept. of Agricult. and Consumer Services for recertification training in Categories 7a-d.

There will be a special one-day training session for pest control technicians on October 29th. This will be separate from the Conference, but will also be held at the Hyatt Hotel. This session will include training in wood-infesting insects and general pest control, and is approved for recertification in Category 7a and 7b.



Va Pest Control Association  
8401 Mayland Drive  
Richmond, VA 23229  
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## FLEA SEASON

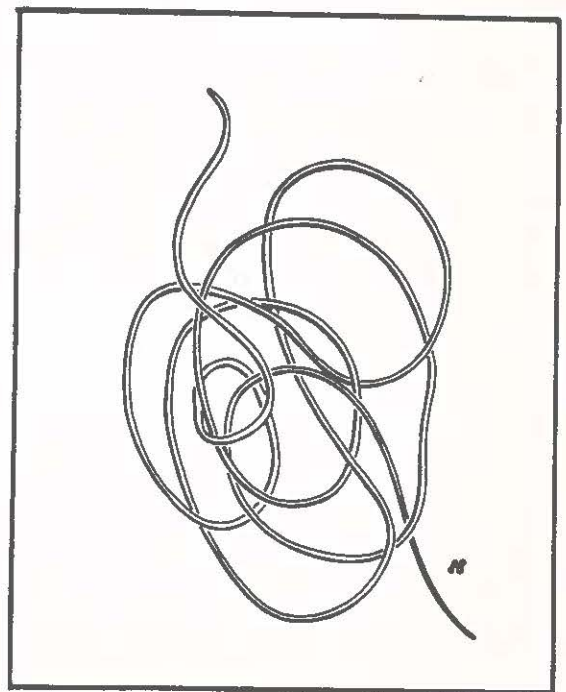
The reasonably dry summer has been replaced by a wet fall. The high temperatures and humidities will be favorable for household flea infestations. Remember these tips on controlling fleas in the home:



- [] Have the pet treated at the veterinarian--first step!
- [] Vacuum pet sleeping areas on a daily basis (removes the flea eggs!).
- [] Consider using an aerosol with a growth regulator included to control flea larvae.
- [] Total-release aerosols may have limited effectiveness in large rooms with a heavy infestation of flea larvae in the carpeting.

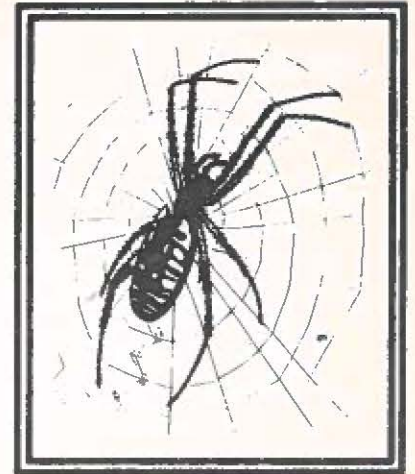
## HORSEHAIR WORMS

The fall season is usually the time homeowners discover horsehair worms in pet water dishes, toilet bowls, or other water containers around the house. These long, slender, yellowish worms are actually internal parasites of insects. They are in the worm family Mermithidae, and they spend most of their life in the abdomen of grasshoppers and crickets. They leave the host they have been parasitizing in the fall, and this is often stimulated by the presence of water--the grasshopper or cricket may land in a pet water dish, and the horsehair worm leaves the body of the insect and swims around in the water.



## ORB SPIDERS

The fall season brings out the spiders! The most striking spider this time of year is the large black and yellow orb weaver that builds its web close to outdoor lights (to better catch insects!). The web is often very large, and may have some heavy zig-zag lines of silk close to the center. These spiders are large and rather striking looking, but rarely represent a hazard to man. They feed on insects that are trapped in the web during the evening and night.

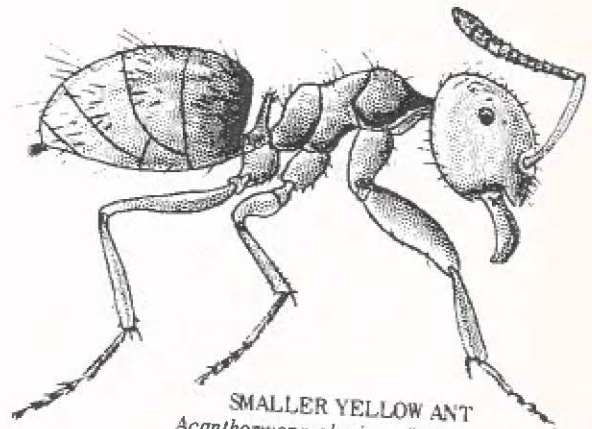
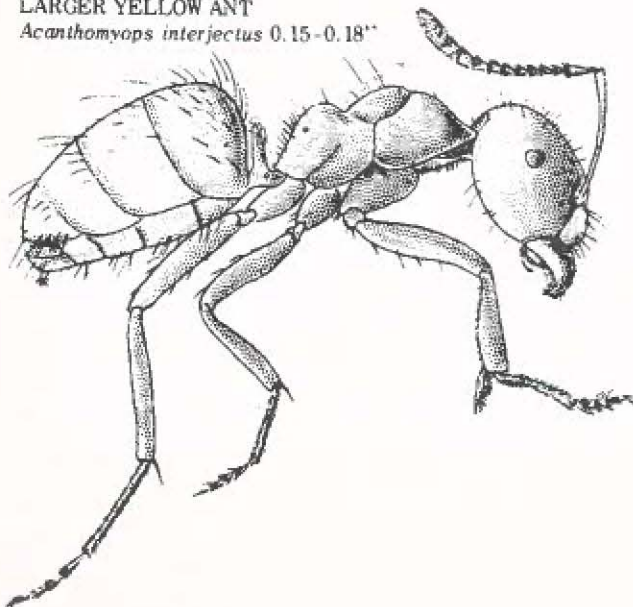


## YELLOW ANTS

Yellow ants frequently swarm in the fall season--causing great concern! They can appear around the outside of houses, usually associated with a sidewalk, patio, other concrete slabs, and foundation walls. Their nests are in these locations, but go unnoticed for most of the year. They swarm in the spring and fall, and there may be thousands of winged ants produced from one or more nests in the area. It is not uncommon for several nests to swarm at the same time--producing lots of ants! Yellow ants are not structural pests, they nest in soil or even in wood close to houses, but rarely enter houses in search of food, and do not damage wood. If control is necessary, use some liquid insecticide (Sevin, diazinon, dursban) directly on the nest.

LARGER YELLOW ANT

*Acanthomyops interjectus* 0.15-0.18"



SMALLER YELLOW ANT  
*Acanthomyops claviger* 0.12-0.15"