

# MuseumPests.net

A Product of the Integrated Pest Management Working Group

## American Cockroach *Periplaneta americana*



### GENERAL INFORMATION

The American cockroach has worldwide distribution but is more common in commercial rather than residential buildings. Common areas infested are basements, steam tunnels, and food storage and preparation areas. During warmer months or in warm climates they can survive outside of structures.

### SIGNS OF INFESTATION

Signs to look for are adults, nymphs, wings, and eggs in the area of concern. Often the adults will travel fair distances along plumbing and heating piping paths from infested basement areas to random rooms. They are then usually noticed near janitor closets, bathrooms, radiators, and other piping areas. In colder climates sources are usually associated with soil pipes, sump pump, or basement drain area. Warmer climates can have wall voids and other areas infested.

### FOOD SOURCES

American cockroaches will feed on most any food with a preference for fermenting foods.

### LIFE CYCLE

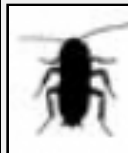
The female glues or drops the ootheca within 4 days of forming. A female produces 6 to 14 ootheca in her lifetime and each ootheca contains 14 to 16 eggs. Average development time from egg to adult is 600 days but can range from 168 to 786 days depending upon temperature and humidity. Adults live 440 days at room temperature but only 225 days at 84 degrees Fahrenheit (29 C) on average with a range from 102 to 588 days.



### DIAGNOSTIC MORPHOLOGY

#### Adults:

- Adults are 1 3/8" to 2 1/8" (34-53mm) long.
- Reddish brown in color with a pale brown to yellowish band around the edge of the pronotal shield.
- The last segment of the cerci is at least 2 times longer than wide.
- Both sexes have full wings but are poor to moderate fliers.
- Nymphs do not have wings
- Ootheca are approximately 3/8" (8mm) long with a length 1.5 times its width.



#### Immature Stage:

- Cockroaches experience gradual metamorphosis and have no larval form. The process goes from egg to nymph to adult.

### CONTROL & TREATMENT

Physical removal, chemical contact pesticides, pesticide baits, and other tactics can be used based on the infested area. Locating the source whether associated with sewer areas, wall voids, or elsewhere in a building will help determine treatment. Sealing areas related to building piping systems is helpful. Often dry floor drains are screened and P-traps are filled with water and topped of with a food grade oil to minimize evaporation. This helps prevent American cockroaches entering directly into a room from the drain. Direct treatment of infested sewer related areas with properly labeled insecticide dust is not an unusual solution.