

Larder beetle fact sheet

They are beetles, approximately 7-9mm in length. They are a dark colour with a light coloured band across their back. The whitish eggs hatch into caterpillar-like larvae, which are covered with tufts of bristle-like hairs. The larvae are often referred to as "woolly bears". After some time the larva forms a pupa from which the adult beetle eventually emerges. The complete lifecycle takes about two to three months and the adult beetles can live for up to a further three months.



Where can they be found?

These insects are found throughout Britain and Europe in houses, factories, shops and farms.

The larvae are usually to be found in corners at the base of skirting boards, often behind the cooker, where they feed upon the condensed grease deposits or on any food spillage.

They can sometimes be found in bathrooms where they presumably feed upon the human skin scales, which are shed whilst disrobing and they lodge under the edges of floor-coverings. They can also be found in birds' nests and sometimes on dead animals such as mice.

During the summer months the adult beetles can fly considerable distances. This is usually how a new infestation is started, through an open window. This is also why the insects are found in tall blocks of flats, often on the upper floors.

What do they eat?

The larvae require a high protein diet and feed on materials of animal origin.

Are larder beetles harmful?

These beetles play only a minute role in the transmission of disease. The greatest harm is that they ruin the foods they contaminate.

How to get rid of larder beetles?

Infestations can be eradicated by applying an insecticidal dust or aerosol spray into the insects' harbourages.