



## Box Elder & Stink Bugs



Box elder and Stink Bugs often become nuisance pests both indoors and out with the approach of fall. Both insects are attracted to the outside of homes in search of warm, protected sites for over-wintering.

Both Box elder and Stink Bugs will frequently attempt to enter cracks and crevices in the walls in an attempt to secure these sites. Even though these insects do not harm humans and do not *reproduce* inside structures such as houses, they cause concern when they become active and conspicuous in the fall and spring.

**Stink Bug:** Stink bugs are broadly shield-shaped, flattened, with a narrow head and rather short legs, and are green to brown. The name “Stink Bug” refers to the scent glands located on the dorsal surface of the abdomen and the underside of the thorax. If many of them are squashed or pulled into a vacuum cleaner, their smell can be quite strong.

**Box elder Bug:** Adult Box elder bugs are about ½ inch long with a dark brown or black coloration, relieved by red wing veins and markings on the abdomen. Nymphs and immature bugs are bright red. Box elder bugs are scentless plant bugs that frequently become a nuisance because of the sheer numbers that can congregate in and around homes.

**Prevention:** Mechanical exclusion is the best method to keep these insects from entering homes and buildings. Here are some tips to help prevent them from entering your home:

- Seal cracks around windows, doors, siding, utility pipes, behind chimneys and underneath wood fascia (molding) with a silicone or silicone latex caulk.
- Repair or replace damaged screens on door and windows.

**Control:** If numerous bugs are entering the living areas of the home:

- Attempt to locate the openings where the insects have gained access.
- Seal these openings with caulk or other suitable materials to prevent the insects from crawling out.
- Both live and dead bugs can be removed from interior areas with the use of a vacuum cleaner.

It is not advisable to use an insecticide inside after the insects have gained access to the home. Although insecticidal treatments may kill thousands of bugs, there is the possibility that carpet beetles will feed on the dead insects and subsequently attack woolens, stored dry goods or other natural products in the home.

Exterior applications of insecticides may offer some relief from infestations where the task of completely sealing the exterior is difficult or impossible. If this is the case, applications should be applied by a licensed pest control operator in the fall just prior to bug congregation.



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