



Information

Bohart Museum of Entomology

No. 027

Oriental Cockroaches

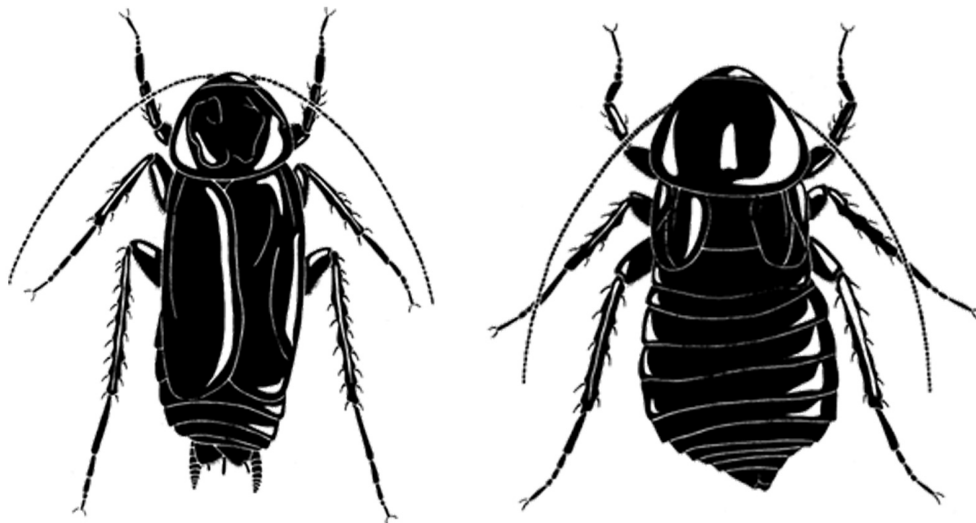
Oriental cockroaches, *Blatta orientalis*, are large, slow-moving, shiny, black insects. Like other cockroaches, they have a flattened oval shape, spiny legs and grow long, filamentous antennae. Oriental cockroaches are known by a variety of other common names including Black Beetles or Water Bugs. Females are slightly larger than males, and have very short wings. Both sexes are about 1 inch (2.4 cm) long. Males have wings and can fly, but rarely do so in California. Females cannot fly, the wings are simply too small.

Oriental cockroach females produce an egg capsule that contains up to 16 eggs. They carry the egg capsules 12 hours to 5 days and deposit them in sheltered locations near or within a food supply at a warm, sheltered spot. Females produce 1 to 18 capsules in a lifetime. Eggs hatch in about 60 days and nymphs develop in about one year. Adult females live 1 to 6 months.

Like other domestic cockroaches, Oriental Cockroaches have been transported by human commerce throughout the world. In and around homes they most commonly are found in cool, damp areas, particularly in garages. During the summer months they also can become quite

common under dense, shaded ground cover in gardens, particularly in beds of ivy. However, these cockroaches generally are found outside only near areas where food is left outside for pets. Garages are commonly infested, particularly if pet food or other kinds of dried food are stored there or if food is left out for animals. It is uncommon for this cockroach to become a pest inside the house. They have a preference for high-moisture conditions. They can live without food for a month if water is present, but die in two weeks without food and water.

The best way to prevent infestation by Oriental Cockroaches, or to eliminate existing populations, is to remove all possible sources of food. Remember that they eat whatever you and your pets will eat. Keep garages and yards clean, and make sure that any food stored in the garage is kept in plastic, glass or metal containers with tight fitting lids. To prevent infestation of cockroaches, pets should not be fed in the yard or garage, or if they are then food should never be left out for any length of time. Pets should be fed only what they will eat at one time.



Oriental cockroaches, male (left) and female (right)