

Flies 101: Know Your Pest

This guide can help you determine which type of fly is an issue on your property.

The common House Fly



Appearance: Gray in color and have four black stripes on their thorax. They can grow to about 1/8-1/4" long, have slightly hairy bodies, a pair of wings and red eyes. They do not have teeth or a stinger.

Lifecycle: As little as six days for a house fly to develop from egg to adult. Female house flies can produce 350-900 eggs in their lifetime. Adults usually live 15-25 days.

Diet: Liquids. They liquefy many solid foods through spitting or regurgitation. They have straw-like tongues to suck up their food. They feed on human food, animal carcasses and garbage.

Danger: Capable of transferring more than 100 different diseases, including salmonella, typhoid and tuberculosis. They contaminate food surfaces by spreading diseases picked up on their legs and mouths when feeding on trash, feces and other decay. They also defecate constantly, which further spreads bacteria. Gross.

Fruit Flies

Appearance: Adults are usually about 1/8 inch long and look brown or tan with red or dark eyes. Fruit flies have six legs and can be hard to spot because of their small size.

Lifecycle: Fruit flies are known for their ability to reproduce very quickly. You may encounter them year-round and their lifespans can last 25 to 30 days. Female fruit flies lay around 500 eggs and they can hatch in as little as 24 hours.

Diet: Fruit flies are aptly named because they eat rotting food matter, especially fruits and vegetables. They can also survive on fermenting liquids, like beer, liquor and wine.

Threats: Similar to house flies, fruit flies can carry diseases on their body and transfer it from surface to surface.



Horse Flies



Appearance: Horse flies have a gray, brown, and black body, and can be over an inch long. They have exceptionally large eyes. Horse flies have six legs attached to a thick body. They also all have short antennae.

Lifecycle: Surprisingly, adult horse flies are capable of flying for more than 30 miles. They typically lay eggs in soil with wildly varying counts—25 to 10,000. Adults live between 30 and 60 days.

Diet: Females feed on blood, while males feed on pollen and plant nectars. Like their namesake, horse flies will feed on large animals by biting and tearing.

Threats: Unlike other flies, horse flies aren't known for transferring disease. However, their bites are painful and horse flies will persist on their target relentlessly.



For additional information on flies and other house pests, follow our blog. We regularly provide critical information, tips, and tricks for keeping your home pest-free!

Images provided by PestWorld.org