



Common Name: **Drugstore beetle**
Scientific Name: **Stegobium paniceum**

DRUGSTORE BEETLE



Introduction. The drugstore beetle apparently got its common name because of its association with stored herbs used as medicine in early apothecaries or drug stores. Its distribution is worldwide.

Recognition. Adult drug store beetles are about 1/16 to 1/8 inch long, oval shaped and reddish brown to brown in color. This beetle has numerous tiny pits on the elytra (wing covers) that are arranged in longitudinal rows. The head and prothorax (front portion of the thorax) are bent downward, making the head barely or not visible from above and giving this beetle a strongly humpbacked appearance. The mature larva is about 1/8 inch long, white and C-shaped, with many short hairs and 6 tiny legs.

Similar Beetles. (1) The cigarette beetle (*Lasioderma serricornes*) is similar in size but has miniscule elytral punctures scattered in distribution, not in rows. (2) Other small beetles can only be distinguished from drugstore beetles by an entomologist, and often requires the use of a microscope.

Biology. The female drugstore beetle lays her oval, whitish eggs in and about the food materials. They hatch in a few days, and there are 4 to 6 larval instars which require 4 to 5 months for development. The full-grown larva pupates in a silken cocoon with bits of foodstuff incorporated into it. Pupation lasts 12 to 18 days. The complete life cycle (egg to egg) usually requires 7 months (range from 60 to 210 days), but there may be 1 to 4 generations per year, depending on the temperature.



Residential Services ✧ Commercial Services ✧ Bird Solutions

Habits. The drugstore beetle attacks a host of dry items that include many household foods and spices, as well as such things as drugs, hair, horn, leather, dead insects, dry carcasses, and museum specimens. Most commonly attacked are bread, flour, meal, breakfast foods, snack foods and condiments such as red pepper. It is also a pest of books and manuscripts. Adults can fly and they are attracted to light.

Cultural Control & Preventative Measures. The first step towards stopping an infestation of drugstore beetles is locating and, if possible, removing the food source(s) or excluding the breeding site(s). Beetles and larvae can be removed using a vacuum cleaner fitted with a hose attachment. Dried foods/ingredients, spices, snack foods and other vulnerable items should be stored in airtight, thick-walled containers until needed.

Professional Control. A Varmant Guard pest management professional will assist in locating drugstore beetle breeding sources and making recommendations for preventing re-infestation. Dead animals / carcasses will be removed, if accessible. A spot treatment of an infested structural void using a residual insecticide dust or a crack and crevice treatment into cabinet and shelf corner seams / junctures using non-residual or residual insecticide aerosol formulations may be applied by the technician to stop additional pest breeding.