



VARMANT GUARD®

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES INC.



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Common Name: **Oriental cockroach; “waterbug”**
Scientific Name: **Blatta orientalis**

ORIENTAL COCKROACH



Introduction. Contrary to its common name, the oriental cockroach is thought to be of North African origin. It is also commonly called a “waterbug”. This species has worldwide distribution.

Recognition. Adult male oriental cockroaches measure 1 inch long whereas, females reach 1 1/4 inch long. They are usually shiny black but may vary to dark reddish-brown. The males wings cover about 75% of the abdomen, leaving the tip of the abdomen exposed. The female has much reduced wings which resemble nymphal wing pads but have veins. Adults do not fly.

Nymphal early instars may be shiny reddish-brown or grayish-brown. Later instars are dark reddish-brown to black.

The egg capsule (ootheca) is reddish-brown when deposited, then changing to black. It is about 3/8 inch long, and about 2 times longer than wide. Egg capsules have the appearance of a miniature purse.

Similar Insects. (1) Some of the larger, dark-colored ground beetles (Coleoptera: Carabidae) have a similar appearance to oriental cockroach nymphs and adults as they scurry across the floor. (2) Other cockroaches are either smaller or larger, have fully developed wings and are not uniformly black in color. However, the nymphs of the Pennsylvania wood cockroach are similar to those of the oriental cockroach.



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Biology. The female usually deposits her egg capsules within about 30 hours (range 12 to 120) after they are formed. They are either dropped or glued to a protected surface in a warm area near a food source. On the average, the female will produce 8 (range 1 to 18) egg capsules with each containing about 16 eggs.

Developmental time (egg to adult) is influenced by temperature, varying from 206 to 800 days but it takes about 575 (males) and 602 (females) days at ordinary room conditions. Adult females live 34 to 181 days whereas, males live 112 to 160 days.

Habits. In many areas, oriental cockroaches survive quite well outdoors and spend considerable time there. They are typically found under debris, stones, and leaf litter, but also beneath pavement, slab floors and in porch voids. They have been observed to survive outdoors during 13 weeks of almost continuous freezing weather.

They usually enter buildings via foundation wall cracks, door thresholds, under sliding glass doors, along utility pipes and air ducts, through unscreened crawlspace vents, and from floor drains. Indoors, they are typically found in crawlspaces, cellars, basements and on the first floor but at times on higher floors, especially around water pipes (in wall voids) which they typically climb.

They feed on all kinds of food and decaying organic matter, but prefer to feed on starchy foods. They are much despised because of their strong “roachy” (rancid) odor and because they feed on filth.

Cultural Control & Preventative Measures. To a degree, oriental cockroaches can be excluded from homes and commercial buildings by making door sweeps and thresholds tight, sealing gaps in foundation walls at utility penetrations, and missing mortar joints and properly screening crawlspace vents. Escutcheon plates should fit tightly at plumbing penetrations into walls and cabinet bottoms. Sticky traps placed in the cabinets beneath the kitchen and bathroom sinks and along the inside perimeter of garage and basement foundation walls can be useful in trapping invasive oriental cockroaches.

Professional Control. A Varmant Guard technician will control oriental cockroaches indoors using strategically placed baits and food lure insect monitors, focusing on cabinets beneath sinks, basement perimeters and box sills, and damp crawl spaces. Residual insecticide dusts may be used in wall voids by plumbing penetrations as well. Outdoors the technician will apply an insecticide bait or residual liquid barrier treatment around the foundation perimeter where these insects enter. A quarterly pest management service program may be required in cases where large populations of oriental cockroaches are present and where landscaping conditions and locality are conducive to their breeding.



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Food lure sticky monitor with oriental cockroaches