

LARDER BEETLE

The larder beetle is a common household pest. This beetle is common in homes, livestock facilities and in any place that contains a suitable food source. Typically, these would include any animal by-product such as dried dog food, furs, hides and feathers. Also, many pantry items can become infested. Another potential food source is dead insects in attics and wall voids that become trapped when they seek an overwintering site. In the fall insects such as flies, ants or wasps accumulate in attics and similar spaces in the home. Many of these hibernating insects die attracting the larder beetle which lay their eggs on dead insects. When the eggs hatch the larvae of the larder beetle feed on the dead insects.

Description

The most familiar stage of the larder beetle (*Dermestes lardarius*) is the adult. These beetles are up to 9 mm (a third of an inch) in length, dark brown to black with a greyish-yellow band roughly across the middle section of the body. The adult larder beetle is capable of flight.

The worm-like larvae is 13 mm (half an inch long), are dark brown on top, fairly hairy, and have a pair of spines at the end of their abdomen.



Larder beetle larvae



Larder beetle (*Dermestes lardarius* L)

Management

The presence of a few adult larder beetles does not necessarily mean there is an infestation, especially if they are found during spring. They may have simply come in from the outdoors and may not be associated with a food source. However, when an infestation is present, the first step in larder beetle management is to try to determine the source of this infestation and remove it.

- Look in areas where you see the most larder beetles and particularly check out areas where food is stored, including dry pet food. Larder beetles in dry pet food can be killed by heating to 50 degrees Celsius for at least half an hour or by freezing the pet food for several days.
- Physically remove and discard any larder beetles that are found (e.g. with a vacuum) as you see them.
- Remove any old bird seeds close to the home and cleaning dead insects from light fixtures, baseboards and windowsills.

Insecticide sprays or dusts applied indoors will have little lasting effect on larder beetles as long as a food source is available.

Information gathered from

http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/pest_management/larder-beetle.aspx

<http://www.capitalhealth.ca/NR/exeres/012FAD07-C39D-47D0-B962-C8F13E4678CE.htm?NRMODE=Unpublished>

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/insects/find/larder-beetles/>