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Scorpion Facts

What To Worry About And What Not To Worry About

Scorpion Behavior

Scorpions are nocturnal or diurnal, predatory animals that feed on a variety of insects, spiders, centipedes, and other scorpions. When invading human habitats their primary food source is crickets and roaches.

Scorpions tend to forage in distinct and separate territories, returning to the same area each night. They may enter homes and buildings when their territory has been disrupted by construction, tree removal or floods. Disrupted scorpions move in a ripple effect and can move up to 1 mile from their original home. The bark scorpion (1-3 inches in length) is the most commonly encountered house scorpion. The bark scorpion is also one of relatively few species that are able climbers.

Scorpion activity is linked to temperature. Generally speaking, scorpions are active if nighttime temperatures are above 70°F. They tend to be less active during winter and the hottest part of the summer during daylight hours.

Most scorpion species are solitary in nature. The exception to this is bark scorpions, which may over winter in aggregates of 20-30.

Where Scorpions Live

In the USA the bark scorpion is found in southeastern California, Arizona, Nevada, southern Utah, and southwestern New Mexico.

Bark scorpions are most commonly found under rocks, logs, tree bark, and other surface objects. They are common throughout many habitats but almost always in rocky areas. Prime scorpion habitats are citrus groves, palm trees, valve or meter boxes, and cinder block walls.

Scorpion Stings

The venom of the bark scorpion may produce severe pain (but rarely swelling) at the site of the sting, numbness, frothing at the mouth, difficulties in breathing (including respiratory paralysis), muscle twitching, and convulsions. Death is rare, especially in more recent times. Certain people, however, may be allergic to the venom and can experience life-threatening side effects when stung (as occurs with bee stings). No cases of anaphylaxis have been reported in Arizona. If you or someone you know is stung by a scorpion call poison control immediately at 1-800-222-1222.

Management of Scorpions

High numbers of scorpions can become a problem under some circumstances. If a reduced population is desirable several steps can be taken. Scorpions are difficult to control with insecticides alone. Therefore, the first control strategy is to modify the area surrounding a house or structure:

- Remove all harborage such as: trash, logs, boards, stones, bricks and other objects from around the building.
- Keep grass closely mowed near the home. Prune bushes and overhanging tree branches away from the structure. Tree branches can provide a path to the roof for scorpions.
- Minimize low growing ground cover vegetation.
- Store garbage containers in a frame that allows them to rest above ground level.
- Never bring firewood inside the building unless it is placed directly on the fire.
- Install weather-stripping around loose fitting doors and windows.
- Plug weep holes in brick veneer with steel wool, pieces of nylon scouring pad or small squares of screen wire.
- Caulk around roof eaves, pipes and any other cracks into the building.
- Keep window screens in good repair. Make sure they fit tightly in the window frame.
- By managing the scorpion food source, you will manage the scorpion population.
- Scorpion management can be achieved with monthly pest control services but can take several months to gain full control.

How to Protect Your Family

Scorpions create an immense level of fear and anxiety, understanding their habits and environment helps in eliminating them from your family living environment. There may be several over the counter products to use as a do-it-yourselfer but professional products are far more effective and achieve a longer residual. Hiring a professional pest control service can help in protecting your family from the dangers of bark scorpions; feel free to contact Lisa at Beadle Bug Patrol at 480.659.5422 for more information and a free phone consultation.