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SERVICE TECHNICIAN

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Premier Issue

Termite Word Puzzle

Below we have listed 26 commonly used terms associated with termites. Some identify termite biology or treatment methods, while others identify key infestation signs. How many can you pick out of the Service Technician termite match game.

P A W S C T Y N A B S U I P S A W N K
 D C N U O H D C B O H X S U W K L A P
 C D R Y W O O D S Q P B A R A G M S D
 Z A V W O R K E R S M C E Q R T S O S
 N Q A X C R A C K L M Y V D L M F E M P
 I Y D A B Y X O P S V N E I T E A W R M
 E G A M A D S Q T R I O Y C S R C L O R
 S U B T E R R A N E A N A I D S Y I F E
 M U W V U B W P W I N G S T L A S C S I
 D O O W P M A D V D S A Q I O T D P B R
 S W Q B J S U B S L A B X M U U R S A R
 M U D T U B E S A O T K C R E H I C S A
 D W A D U L T E W S U A E E V J L P E B
 F U M I G A T I O N A W Q T Z P L V M Q
 A W M S O I L G R A D E A Q V N I Z E S
 R E T R E A T H C R E V I C E O N Y N C
 E C A P S L W A R C S B N O P W G A T M

ANSWERS: ADULT, BARRIER, BASEMENT, COLONIES, CRACK, CRAWLSPACE, CREVICE, DAMAGE, DAMPWOOD, DRILLING, DRYWOOD, FORMOSAN, FUMIGATION, MOISTURE, MUD TUBES, NYMPHS, RETREAT, SOIL GRADE, SOLDIERS, SUBSLAB, SUBTERRANEAN, SWARMERS, TERMITICIDE, THORAX, WINGS, WORKERS (Answers on page 81)

The Best of Short Takes

Over the years, the "Short Takes" column that appears in *Service Technician's* sister publication *Pest Control Technology*, has provided readers with a humorous look at some of the most unusual pest-related stories ever published. We've gone through more than three years of back issues and picked out what we think are the "Best of Short Takes." We hope you agree. Enjoy!



DIE, BUBBA DIE! Female technicians will undoubtedly get a kick out of an article that appeared in *Ume Reader*, a bi-monthly publication with a circulation of more than 250,000. The magazine reported that an advertising executive working on the Raid account said the reason low-income Southern women were the heaviest users of roach spray was that "a lot of their feelings about the roach were very similar to the feelings they had about the men in their lives." In a rather disturbing, albeit amusing, analogy, the cockroaches, like their significant other, "only come around when they want food." The act of spraying roaches and seeing them die was satisfying to this frustrated group, according to *Ume Reader*. Ain't love grand?

WHAT'S IN A NAME? Time for a pop quiz. What common structural pest is also the name of the bass player the Red Hot Chili Peppers? The answer: Flea. Apparently, playing guitar in a rock band isn't a bad way to *scratch* out a living.

Amazing Insect Facts

Orkin Pest Control entered into a marketing agreement with veteran NASCAR driver Wally Dellenbach several years ago to sponsor his race car, appropriately named "The Exterminator," in the Talladega DieHard 500 auto race. In the process, Orkin came up with some amazing insect facts and their unique relationship to race car driving.

The fastest flying bug is the Australian dragon fly, which flies 36 mph. The Talladega Super Speedway is the world's fastest race track.

The fastest crawling bug is the large tropical cockroach, moving almost 3 mph! World famous driver Bill Elliott set the world stock car record in the 500 mile race at Talladega with an average speed of 186 mph.

Tech Tips

Successful treatment strategies are often the result of a little technician ingenuity. But that shouldn't be too surprising. After all, who knows the "ins and outs" of an account better than the person servicing it? In an attempt to "share the wealth," *Service Technician* magazine will present a proven service tip from one of our readers in every issue of the magazine. We encourage technicians to incorporate these tips into their daily service routines and share with us any tips they've acquired over the years. If you have a tip you would like to share with our readers, send it to: Tech Tips, 4012 Bridge Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113.

A Case of Mistaken Identity

Just when you think you're getting pretty good at identifying pests by the type of frass (plant fragments made by a wood-boring insect, usually mixed with excrement) they're leaving behind, consider the following true story of mistaken identity.

A pest control company is called in by a customer who complains of debris collecting along the foundation ledge below the exterior wood siding of their home. On the basis of a visual inspection of this debris, the PCO informs the customer that the house is infested with powderpost beetles, and that the only way to eliminate them is to fumigate the entire home.

The customer, not satisfied with the prospect of having to fumigate the house, decides to get a second opinion. Upon a more detailed inspection, it is actually



Drywood termite frass



Powderpost beetle frass



Acrobat ant frass

belonged to a species of acrobat ant, whose frass very closely resembles that of a powderpost beetle, but requires a completely different treatment. Instead of fumigation, all that is necessary is wood injection in localized areas of the ant infestation. This species of acrobat ant is highly variable in color, but generally the black ones are found on oak trees and red and black ones on pine trees. They have a sweet tooth and often tend insects that produce honey dew. Nests have been found in woodwork of homes, in rafters, siding and under shingles. Damage may be done to hard fiber board, insulating board and wire insulation.

This story illustrates the importance of accurate identification in pest

control. First, after correctly identifying the pest, it is easier to inspect for other evidence of infestation, harborage area, and means of pest entry. Second, a pest must be accurately identified in order to proceed with appropriate recommendations for control.

When the actual pest can't be located, identification must be made from damage, tracks, droppings or cast skins. Fortunately, the debris of wood-boring insects can be distinguished (see photos). In any case, identification must be accurate to ensure successful control. This is especially true in this case, where inaccurate identification would have led to considerable waste of time and money. **ST**

This article was submitted by John Klotz and Lloyd Davis Jr. of the Household Insects Unit, USDA-ARS, Gainesville, Fla.

Service Technician