



Pest Species Identification Guide

A free field guide from ASC Pest Control to help South African food and beverage teams recognise the pests that matter, understand what each one tells you about the building, and act before it becomes a finding. Correct species identification is the first step of Integrated Pest Management. If you are unsure, photograph the pest or sign and send it to us on WhatsApp and a registered specialist will identify it.

RODENTS



Brown rat (Norway rat)

Rattus norvegicus

IDENTIFY BY

Large, 20 to 27 cm body, blunt nose, small ears, thick tail shorter than the body, coarse brown-grey fur.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Ground level, burrows, drains, dock levellers, wall bases, external bait line.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Structural gaps at low level and harbourage outside. Prioritise proofing of doors, drains and dock areas.

[Illustration on request](#)

Roof rat (black rat)

Rattus rattus

IDENTIFY BY

Slender, large ears and eyes, tail longer than the body, an agile climber.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Roof voids, false ceilings, high racking, service runs and cabling.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Access at height. Inspect roof lines, eaves and service penetrations, not just the floor.



House mouse

Mus musculus

IDENTIFY BY

Small, 7 to 9 cm body, large ears, pointed snout, tail about as long as the body, small droppings.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Indoors near food and warmth, voids, pallets, false ceilings, equipment.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

An internal population, often carried in with deliveries. Focus on internal monitoring and stock inspection.

COCKROACHES

**German cockroach***Blattella germanica***IDENTIFY BY**

Small, 12 to 15 mm, light brown with two dark stripes behind the head. Breeds fast.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Warm humid tight harbourage: motor housings, dishwasher, kettle and fryer voids, cardboard.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

An internal breeding infestation carried in on cardboard or equipment. A serious audit red flag.

**American cockroach***Periplaneta americana***IDENTIFY BY**

Large, 35 to 40 mm, reddish-brown, pale ring behind the head, can fly short distances.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Warm damp voids, drains, sub-floors, service ducts, boiler rooms.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Links to drains and sub-floor voids. Check drainage, sumps and service penetrations.

**Oriental cockroach***Blatta orientalis***IDENTIFY BY**

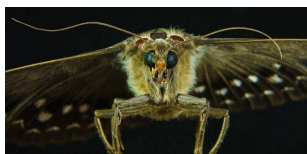
25 to 30 mm, very dark, almost black, slow moving, prefers cooler damp areas.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Drains, basements, cool damp store rooms, external refuse areas.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Damp and drainage problems. Address moisture and external harbourage.

STORED PRODUCT INSECTS**Stored product moths***Ephestia kuehniella, Plodia interpunctella***IDENTIFY BY**

Small greyish moths, larvae spin webbing in product. Adults flutter near ceilings and lights.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Mills, bakeries, warehouses, ambient dry goods, dead spots and residues.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Residues in dead spots and slow stock rotation. Deep clean and pheromone monitor.

**Red flour beetle***Tribolium castaneum***IDENTIFY BY**

Small, 3 to 4 mm, reddish-brown, elongated, clubbed antennae, moves fast in flour and meal.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Flour, meal, bran, cereal residues in mills, bakeries and stores.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

An establishing infestation in residue. Inspect and clean spillage, sieve and rotate stock.

**Rice / granary weevil***Sitophilus oryzae / granarius***IDENTIFY BY**

2 to 3.5 mm, dark, distinctive long snout, develops inside whole grains.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Whole grain, rice, maize and seed in silos and stores.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Grain is being infested from within. Check incoming grain and storage hygiene.

FLIES AND FLYING INSECTS**House fly and filth flies***Musca domestica***IDENTIFY BY**

6 to 7 mm, grey thorax with stripes, sponging mouthparts. Rests on surfaces and product.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Near waste, drains, organic matter, open doors and windows.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Sanitation and proofing gaps. Check bins, drains, door screens and fly units.

**Fruit and small flies***Drosophila species***IDENTIFY BY**

2 to 4 mm, tan, often red eyes, hover around fermenting or sugary residue.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Beverage plants, fruit handling, drains, spillage, recycling.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Fermenting residue and drain films. Deep clean drains and remove sugary spillage.

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH PESTS**Mosquitoes***Culex, Aedes, Anopheles species***IDENTIFY BY**

Slender, long legs, narrow wings, females bite. Larvae develop in standing water.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Standing water, tanks, gutters, damp external areas.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Standing water on or near site. Remove breeding sites and manage water.



Fleas

Ctenocephalides species

IDENTIFY BY

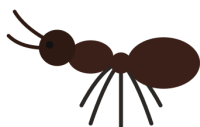
Tiny, 1 to 3 mm, flattened side to side, jump, dark brown. Bites in clusters.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Staff areas, around animals, cracks and soft furnishings.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Animal activity or a vector on site. Treat source and environment together.



Ants

Linepithema, Camponotus and others

IDENTIFY BY

Three body segments, elbowed antennae, trailing in lines to food and sugar.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Trails along walls and services to sugary and protein food sources.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

An external nest and a food attractant. Gel bait to the colony and remove the attractant.

BIRDS



Feral pigeon

Columba livia

IDENTIFY BY

Grey, iridescent neck, stocky. Roosts on ledges, in roof voids and on structures.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Roof lines, ledges, loading bays, high racking and external structures.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Roosting and access at height. Fouling contaminates product and surfaces. Proof and deter.



House sparrow

Passer domesticus

IDENTIFY BY

Small brown bird, males with a grey cap and black bib. Nests in voids and roof spaces.

WHERE YOU FIND IT

Inside warehouses, packhouses and high-roof buildings through open doors and gaps.

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Open access points. Screen doors and vents and remove nesting harbourage.

Need help? Book a free site assessment at ascpestcontrol.co.za, call +27 41 004 0037 or WhatsApp +27 61 138 3989. ASC Pest Control is South Africa's only pest control company owned by accredited food safety specialists. SAPCA member ASC797. Registered PCOs under Act 36 of 1947.