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Know Your Pest Poop

Bugs and rodents announce their presence with the distinctive waste they leave behind



There are a variety of pests that may be leaving their droppings in your kitchen cabinets, drawers, closets, attic and just about anywhere else you can imagine in your home. Let's take a look at some of the most common pest poop in Hawaii:

Drywood Termite Droppings

We have seven different species of termites in Hawaii. The most destructive to our homes are the drywood and ground termites. Drywood termites push individual droppings out of their colony one at a time. They do so through what is called a "kick-out hole," which is about the size of a pin prick. As they push out a dropping one at a time it will form what looks like a neat pile of sand just below the kick-out hole.

That being said, drywood termite droppings are often mistaken for either dust, dirt, sand or even ant graveyards—spiders sometimes feast upon big-headed ants, leaving dead ant body parts. Big-headed ants dispose and push waste out of their colony making piles of dirt and dead ant body parts. These "ant graveyards" are sometimes mistaken for termite droppings.

Drywood termite droppings can be on a color spectrum from black to a very light tan, depending on the type of wood being eaten. On occasion, they can be a combination of brown and black.

Bedbug Droppings

I'd almost rather have termite droppings than bedbugs. These nasty bugs are very difficult to control because of re-infestation from the original source, which is often difficult to



determine. You will know you have bedbugs when you have blood stains on your mattress or sheets. Sometimes the first indication are bites, which a doctor can help you identify.

Bedbugs feed off humans like fleas feed on cats. For this reason, the most common place to see bed bugs is on a mattress, bedframe, box spring and sheets. You will most commonly find bed bug fecal matter, eggs and nesting sites in the seams of the mattress. However, bed bugs can live in picture frames, electrical outlets, baseboards, couches and furniture crevices.

Although they are not vectors of disease, they can cause skin irritation and can quickly produce an unappealing environment. Although Waikiki has traditionally been a bedbug hotspot, we have found cases in homes from Hawaii Kai to Pupukea. Bedbugs are so invasive, they take much more thorough treatment than most pests. Many exterminators won't even deal with them because they're so hard to control.

A big part of control has to do with catching the infestation early. Bedbugs generally will be introduced into a structure through luggage, used furniture or from storing or moving your belongings in an infested truck or container.

Gecko Droppings

Geckos can be helpful for pest control for some of the harder-to-control flying pests. They're usually found outside near lights that attract flying bugs at dinner time. You'll often find droppings in this area, but sometimes you'll find them in other areas of the house, especially in open-beam ceiling homes where there's no ceiling to catch these bombs (so to speak).

Gecko droppings vary by the shape, size and color. They can be the same

size as mouse or even rat droppings, which can be of concern to people. But except for the aesthetics, gecko droppings don't have the same diseases that can be present in the poop of rodents. Gecko poop is brown, elongated and about 1/4-inch in length and about 1/8-inch in width. The identifying characteristic is the urea cap, which gives the dropping a white tip.

American Roach Droppings

747's, brown eagles and the Hawaii state bird are a few of the nicknames for this pest. They're known by their common name, American roaches. They are big brown roaches seen crawling and flying around Hawaii. They can be an inch to 2 inches long and are uniformly brown in color with a very light tan stripe across their thorax.

Fortunately, they don't infest inside homes too much. Unfortunately, they will come inside your home from the outdoors and sewers where they breed. They can fly in or crawl through cracks around windows and other entry points.

American roach droppings are surprisingly big and are sometimes mistaken for mice droppings. It is important to know the difference.

American droppings are brown or black, cylindrically-shaped, with ridges and blunt ends, whereas mice droppings have the appearance of black rice with pointed ends. The roach droppings may have the appearance that they have been chopped up.



German Roach Droppings

German roach droppings look like a group of small black specs in cracks,