

Black Carpet Beetles Identification

By DoMyOwn staff

Also Known As: Carpet Beetles, Fabric Pests, Pantry Pests

What do black carpet beetles look like?

The adult form of the black carpet beetle is shiny reddish-black with brown legs, and may be 1/8- to 3/16-inch long. Larvae are long and carrot-shaped, brown or golden in color, and have a tuft of long, curled bristly hair at the tail end of the body. Eggs are small and pearly white.

Behavior & Habitat

Black carpet beetles are often brought into homes on fresh cut flowers. Larvae may be introduced on wool items, carpeting, or stored foodstuffs brought into the home. Sometimes when birds or other animals die in attics or chimneys, the carcass becomes a food source for larvae. Once inside, black carpet beetle larvae like to feed in places that are dark, protected, and undisturbed. They move very slowly and leave behind cast skins. More active forms of an infestation may distribute themselves in places such as air ducts, behind baseboards, among furniture stuffing, and in the bristles of old paint brushes. Adults are drawn to the light and spend most of their time flying in windows.

Food Preferences

Black carpet beetle larvae feed on silk, wool, fur, hair, bristles, feathers, upholstered furniture, piano felts, air ducts, lint, stored foods and cereals, and dog food. The adult black carpet beetle prefers the nectar and pollen of outdoor flowers. Black carpet beetle adults generally will not live long unless they find their way outside.

Life Cycle

The female black carpet beetle lays on average about 90 eggs at once, which will hatch within 6 to 11 days in warm weather, or up to 16 days in cooler weather. She will die a few days later. Newly hatched larvae can survive for a long time, anywhere from 258 to 640 days at room temperature, and usually overwinter in this stage. Larvae may also molt up to 20 times before pupating in the last larval skin. The pupal period lasts 6 to 24 days. Adult black carpet beetles may live from 2 weeks to several months.

Prevention

- **Vacuum, vacuum, vacuum!** - Vacuuming your home frequently helps to get rid of materials such as debris, pet hair, and lint that can support carpet beetle populations.
- Always dry clean or launder woolens and other susceptible fabrics before storing them for long periods of time.
- Store items made of wool or silk in tightly sealed garment bags with several fabric pest repellents (moth balls).
- Infested articles should be immediately disposed of when found. Do not try to salvage infested items, the infestation will likely just continue to spread.

Professional Products for Black Carpet Beetle Control:

- [Suspend SC](#)
- [Gentrol IGR](#)
- [Drione Dust](#)

For more detailed information on Carpet Beetle prevention and control, see [Get Rid of Carpet Beetles](#).

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