Where Do Bed Bugs Come From

By DoMyOwn staff

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Bed bug History

Bed bugs derive from one of the three lineages of the Heteroptera suborder that have all adapted specifically as blood feeders. This adaption to require a blood meal is called hematophagy, haematophagy, or hematophagia.

The cimicids began as a family primarily feeding on bats or birds as hosts. Research speculates that the transition from birds to bats then to bats and humans took place in the era of humans dwelling in caves. The human time frame of inhabiting caves dates back to the Paleolithic period. It is said to have taken place anywhere from 2 million to 10,000 years ago during the Stone Age. The extension of the *Cimex lectularis* to bats and primarily humans is said to have occurred somewhere is the range of the Indonesian areas.

Bed bugs are introduced in literature as far back as the historical Roman and Greek ages when writing techniques where perfected. This dates back to around 405 to 400 BC, over 2,500 years ago.

The history of bed bug and human relationship is reflected in both language and legend. The Indo-European, African, and Oriental languages all have names for bed bugs. These unpopular companions are mentioned throughout Greek literature. Bed bugs are even mentioned in the Talmud and New Testament.

This insect is also feature in works by many famous scientist and physicians like Aristotle, Pliny, and Guettard. The bed bug was said to aid in curing many ailments like bites and infections. Though they could have been written about long ago in the times of the Phoenicians, Babylonians, and Assyrians, no record of them has survived.

Between the 11th and 19th centuries it was said that bed bugs where introduced into the European civilizations in wood shipments to rebuild London after the Great Fire's destruction. Bed bugs where repelled and killed it many unique ways. The people would use anything from oils, plants, fungi, peppers, insect juices, tobacco, and other herbs. The later centuries used smoked plant fires to produce a fumigant. They also used diatomaceous earth and other soil types as well to repel the bugs. All of the early techniques took a long time to affect the bed bugs. The use of plants with micro hooks, like bean leaves, proved to be a helpful form of trapping the bed bugs then the leaves where burned! During these centuries it was said that bed bugs thrived in the warmer seasons. It is suspected that the invention of heat and temperature systems aided in the survival of the species year round.

The use of DDT came into effect and all insects where halted by this pesticide. The bed bugs were then forgotten throughout the years. Bed bugs have appeared to have come out of thin air. The resurgence of bed bugs into the center stage has been quite a shock after spending over 50 years in the dark. Just over a decade ago, the bed bug was below the top insect pest charts. In recent years bed bugs have risen to generate about 90% of pest management issues. Humans have deemed the bed bug as one of the most successful and hardy ectoparasite in the world.

After the use of DDT in the 1940s to 1970s the species was thought to lose its place in the pest control world. Over the years, bed bugs have grown resistant to common pyrethroid insecticides. Due to the other pests lack of vigilance it has allowed the beg bug to reach epidemic proportions.

The bed bug travels worldwide with free tickets to any country it can hitch a ride to. Today, travel is at an all-time high, which allows bedbugs to shipped anywhere.

It is said that the bed begs come from the old world. The old world is made up of the European, Asian, Middle Eastern, and Indonesian areas. This is where the bed bug gained free travel through various trade routes and expeditions. The bed bug is flightless, so this mode of transportation was perfect for being introduced to new habitats. The adult bed bug is hardy and could survive long periods of time without blood meals. This allowed it to move from location to location perfectly undetected. When the adult females did feed, they release maximum amounts of egg volumes to increase the numbers of the populations.