Types of Bed Bugs

By DoMyOwn staff

Types of Bed bugs or Cimicids:

Bed Bug *(Cimex lectularius)*

- 4 to 6 mm in size
- Found throughout North America
- Covered in short hairs
- Flat round body shape
- What color are bed bugs?
    - Eggs are creamy to a white color
    - The bed bug larvae or nymphs start off as a transparent glossy yellow and shift to more orange and rustic red as they molt
    - Adult bed bug color is a rusty red color and a bright red color when full of blood

Comparable Species

Colorado Bed Bug *(Hesperocimex coloradoensis)*

Bat bug

- *(Cimex latipennis)*
- *(Cimex brevis)*
- *(Cimex adujunctus)*
- *(Cimex pilosellus)*

Swallow bug *(Oeciacus vicarious)*

Bloodsucking Conenose (*Triatoma sanguisuga)*

- AKA: Big bed bug, Mexican bed bug, kissing bug, and Eastern bloodsucking conenose
- They fed on the blood of all vertebrates
- Found in the family Reduviidae
- This family is contains the ambush bugs and assassin bugs
- 16 to 20 mm in size
- They have a flattened oval body shape
- Bugs are characterized with a slender tapered beak
- Abdomen has six red, orange, or yellow on each side
- The colors vary from a mixture of brown, black, and light yellow-tan
- Found commonly in all states including and between Pennsylvania to Florida, Illinois, Kansas to Arizona, and southern Texas

Western Bloodsucking Conenose *(Triatoma protracta)*

- AKA: Big bed bug and cross bug
- They fed on all vertebrates but prefer to fed on a nest of rodents
- Found in the family Reduviidae
- This family is contains the ambush bugs and assassin bugs
- 15 to 20 mm in size
- They have a flatten oval body shape with flares at the sides
- Bugs are characterized with a slender tapered beak
- Primarily dark brown to a blackish color
- Found commonly in California to Colorado, and Texas into Mexico

Commonly mistaken species:

The most common mistake is that people assume that other ectoparasites are bed bugs! Though the body anatomy and colors from afar with the naked eye makes for a compelling comparison, but up close and by nature these external parasites are all completely different. Some refer to these common species as black bed bugs, but bed bugs are not black. They are a rusty brown red color.

Ticks

The tick practices hematophagy, or the requirement of a blood meal, like the bed bug. Ticks are wingless and bear two primary or distinct sections of the head and body regions. The species also locates its potential hosts much like the bed bug with CO2 and heat levels. Ticks are actually small arachnids related closely to spiders. Through development and life cycle, ticks remain very tiny in size in nymph stages. This is where ticks may be commonly confused with bed bugs. The tick species is predominately an outdoor ectoparasite. They also will parasitize most wild life and animals with an occasional human case. Ticks have eight legs and are dark brown to black in color. When the tick is engorged it becomes extremely pale to a tan color

and is almost three times its normal size. The life cycle of a tick is usually spent on the host, while bed bugs will discretely feed and leave to a hiding place.

Mites

The mites, like ticks, are found in the arachnid class. They are wingless like bed bugs. Mites and bed bugs tend to occupy similar habitats. Mites are extremely small and hard to see with the naked eye. They have a head and body region much like bed bugs, but bed bugs have three body regions. Bed bugs and mites often share a common characteristic to cause allergic reactions in humans. The mite species as a whole is most commonly known to parasitize plants and outdoor species of animals. There are chances that some species can become introduced into homes. Dust mites and some bird mite species are known to occupy homes like the bed bug. In most cases, bed bugs are often preyed upon by the mite species. Mites do not solely feed on blood. The species can survive on soil and water if needed. It is most common for mites to feed on the dead skin and hair of mammals which includes humans.

Louse or Lice

Louse, or in the plural form, lice, are insects like bed bugs that have adapted to base the species' life cycle around a preferred host by parasitism. Lice and bed bug eggs have an adhesive that is produced naturally when they are laid to secure the egg in place when laid. Some species of louse feed on skin, while others feed on secretions and blood. Both crab lice and head lice are a particular problem in humans. Lice are commonly dark gray, but once fed with blood become a dark brown. They have similar life cycles to the other ectoparasites, having nymph stages looking like miniature adults. Though lice are extremely small in comparison to bed bugs, they inhabit more outdoor habitats and outdoor species.