

WOODLICE – Control Advice

Description

Woodlice are not part of the insect family, but are actually crustaceans, related to shrimps. They are oval shaped, black or grey in colour, can grow up to a centimetre in length and some types can roll up into a ball on being disturbed. They feed off decayed wood or other soft debris and need damp environments to survive. Commonly found in gardens beneath flower pots or other types of sheltered damp areas, they can sometimes get inside homes looking for shelter, but are not harmful and do not bite.

Control measures

When found indoors, they can be picked up or removed by sweeping using a dustpan and brush. If large numbers are found inside a room, it is likely that the room is damp since woodlice require moisture to live. If they become persistent, an insecticide for crawling insects from a hardware store, garden centre or chemist can be used (be careful to follow the product instructions carefully). A careful check should be made of the walls outside an affected room because it is likely they have found a way inside through a defective part of a wall. Clear away from the outside wall anything that might hold onto moisture or provide a home for woodlice e.g. garden waste etc.

Other potential sources of entry could be via window frames, so check for signs of rot, since woodlice can live in the gaps between the frames and brickwork. Also check roof eaves for abandoned bird's nests and sweep them out. Repair any damage and seal any gaps. If the problem persists, there may be other sources of dampness such as condensation or beneath floorboards there may be a defective damp proof course (which may need a builder to remedy).

This information is provided for advice only. The Council does not provide a pest control service to deal with woodlice, since the remedy ultimately depends on treating the source of the dampness that allows these creatures to survive inside homes.