

pest

The independent UK pest management magazine

Not so black & white!

Issue 30
November & December 2013

Those bed bugs just
keep on movin!



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PestTech 2013 hits
the target



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A new meaning to
the season of giving



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Black rats are back
or did they ever go?



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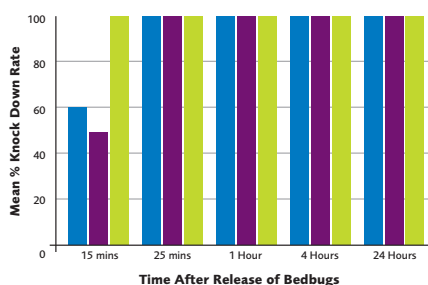
LABORATORY TESTS

The following test results detail the efficacy of Phobi Dose on three types of surfaces. Phobi Dose was sprayed on each surface and left to dry before bedbugs were released. The first graph details results immediately after treatment – the second shows results 14 days after treatment when bedbugs were re released.

■ Textile (ie carpet) ■ Plywood ■ Ceramic Tiles

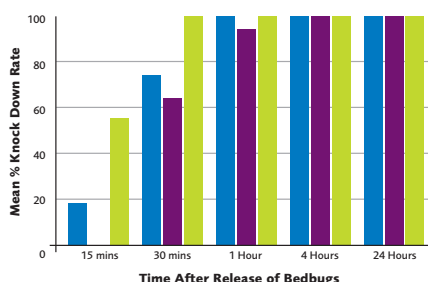
Trial at Day 0

Knock down speed of all bedbugs after treatment.



Trial at Day 14

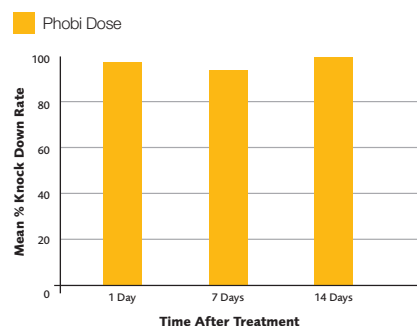
Knock down speed of all bedbugs 14 days after treatment.



FIELD TEST

5 separate apartments were treated independently within a multi storey block of flats. 5 apartments in the same block were untreated to act as a control. Bedbug infestations averaged medium to high in each apartment.

The graph shows the average control in all 5 apartments within 14 days from the initial treatment.



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Aims

As the industry's only independent magazine, **Pest** aims to deliver a mix of unbiased news, impartial advice and topical technical features. We are committed to being as inclusive as possible covering every sector of the pest management industry.

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It'll soon be Christmas

Autumn is the time when the pest control industry gets together. Highlights this year were definitely PestTech which celebrated 21 years – can it really be that long since the first one – and PestWorld which this year went to sunny, but rather sleepy, Phoenix in Arizona, USA.

Congratulations to NPTA and NPMA for organising those events. Killgerm in the guise of *Pest Control News* should also be congratulated for rounding off the PestTech day with a new feel to the PCN dinner. The diners were all pleased to hear that there was only one inductee into the Hall of Fame, the instigator himself, Jonathan Peck.

This is our last issue of 2013 and we hope you have enjoyed the read. If you're collecting PROMPT CPD points then turn to page 39 where we've printed this year's reference number.

With Christmas now rushing towards us all, what remains to be said is that we hope you, our readers, advertisers and all those who have contributed to the production of **Pest** publications in 2013, have a relaxing Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Frances Helen

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**Adrian
 Patrick
 Meehan**
 1947 -
 2013

In the **Pest** office we were sad to hear of the death of Adrian Meehan on 14 October. Although Adrian had not played an active role in the industry for some years, he was very well-known in the 1970s and 80s for his rodenticide work. His book, published as part of the Rentokil Library in 1984, is still widely referred to by students, pest control practitioners and expert witnesses alike.

After graduating from the University of Aston in Birmingham, Adrian spent a period carrying out research in Zambia. His involvement with rodents, which became his main area of expertise, began in 1972 when he joined Rentokil to assume responsibility of the Rodent Unit at Felcourt.

During his career as chief scientist at Rentokil's research and development division, he advised on control of the 'behaviour resistant' mice in Birmingham, Glasgow and London. He also developed the lard-based rodenticide formulations which proved extremely palatable and are still used by Rentokil today. The mid-eighties also saw the development of a remote detection system envisaged to provide high dependency industries with a rodent prevention service which did not require the use of toxic materials.

Adrian was considered an authority on the development of anticoagulant resistance in rats and mice. He was a founder member of the Industry's Rodenticide Resistance Action Group, which has produced information and guidelines on dealing with resistant rats that benefit all who are involved in rodent control.

In previous years he was an accomplished rugby, cricket and table tennis player and was known to keep goal in the Rentokil five-a-side football team.

Parasitec goes to Morocco

On 13-14 November the international pest management road-show moved to Casablanca, Morocco for Parasitec. Over the two days nearly 400 visitors attended from 11 countries to take-in the 37 exhibition stands.

The event was well supported by officials from the Kingdom of Morocco, including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior.

The major pest problems encountered in the country were to the fore with a large delegation of medical officers and health and safety officials. All exhibitors were able to establish sustainable links with those involved in the Moroccan, and more widely, the markets of the Maghreb. Next year the event returns to Paris on 19-21 November, with plans afoot for what could be Istanbul in 2015.



Fuel costs controlled

With a fleet of a dozen cars, plus another dozen light commercial vehicles ranging from vans to a tipper truck, the fuel bill at Manchester-based Pestproof represents a major cost item. Fed-up with his previous fuel card supplier, managing director, Steve Ivell needed to find a way to control and, if possible, reduce fuel costs.



After evaluating a number of suppliers, he settled on The Fuelcard People. His drivers now all carry a Texaco Fastfuel card. He said, "We know, in advance, exactly how much we are going to be paying for diesel or petrol, anywhere in the country."

Two new commercial directors

Steve Bilton has joined Knaresborough-based **P+L Systems** taking on the newly created role of commercial director.

Originally from Sunderland, Steve gained his degree in management sciences marketing from Lancaster University. After a period of time working for Vaux Breweries, he moved to Yorkshire where he worked for Sara Lee Bakery before moving on to Reckitt Benckiser. During his time with Reckitt Benckiser Steve looked after the marketing for household names such as Mr Sheen, Dettox, Windolene and Airwick.

After moving back to the North East, Steve joined Culpitt where he looked after their sales and marketing for 10 years.

Steve joins P+L Systems with the vision of developing the company's customer insight culture as well as helping the Group's brands, which include Insect-O-Cutor, Network and SX Environmental, to continue to deliver against customers' evolving needs.

Hockley International, the Manchester-based manufacturer and exporter of products globally, has announced the appointment of Tommy Gill as director of commercial operations. In this capacity he is responsible for continued development of all activities in sales, marketing, operations and logistics.

A graduate of University College, Dublin, and with extensive experience in agricultural, horticultural and garden retail markets, Tommy has held various senior management positions in Ireland and the UK and has recently completed projects to deliver growth strategies to a number of companies.



Steve Bilton



Tommy Gill

Prime contracts won

Shield Pest Control, based in Lewisham, has been awarded the pest control contract to protect St Katharine Docks in London.

The historic estate near Tower Bridge includes a marina, restaurants and shops, four commercial buildings including International House and Commodity Quay and luxury residential apartments.

Managing director, Daniel Steward said, "St Katharine Docks is a great addition to our portfolio which includes the Royal Households and the Houses of Parliament. It is a large site covering over 10 acres and as a major tourist attraction it has a high visitor footfall. It's a complex and diverse site and its proximity to water means that rodent monitoring and prevention is a key element of both internal and external pest control services."

OCS Group, the international total facilities management company, has secured an extension to its soft facilities management contract with BUPA, the private healthcare company, which it has held since 2009. The contract is worth in excess of £21 million over the course of the contract term. In addition to pest control, OCS will provide horticulture, alarm response and key holding, security systems, manned guarding, cleaning, consumables and some other services to 34 sites across the UK.



Top prizes scooped by Graham Environmental

For the second year running, Blairgowrie-based Graham Environmental Service won awards at the Perthshire Chamber of Commerce Business Star Awards held at the Crieff Hydro Hotel on 22 November. This time they were crowned Perthshire's top business.

The Blairgowrie-based company, which employs around 50 staff, also took top honours in the Business Growth category. Accepting the award, managing director Ross Graham said: "This is a team award and I couldn't be more proud of everyone that made this title possible.

"I could never have imagined when the company was first set up 10 years ago that we would ever be named Perthshire's top business - everyone's hard work has really paid off and I couldn't be more proud and pleased."



L to R: George Stubbs from sponsors GS Group, Ross Graham and Stephen Leckie, president of the Chamber of Commerce

Memorial service for Jonathan Peck

Following the death of Jonathan Peck on 15 September 2013, a service to celebrate his professional and personal achievements is to be held on 11 April 2014 at Southwark Cathedral commencing at 11.00. This will be followed by a reception at the headquarters of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) at Chadwick Court, 15 Hatfields, London, SE1 8DJ where presentations on his work will be given, followed by a drinks reception at 17.00. Anyone wishing to attend needs to register at www.jonathanpeckmemorial.com

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Save our SGARs



Do your bit to protect the use of second-generation anticoagulants

Left to right: NPTA's Iain Turner, BPCA's Simon Forrester, NPAP's Dave Oldbury, Killgerm's Rupert Broome and CRRU's Dr Alan Buckle

It's time for all rodenticide users to pull together and demonstrate that second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) can be used safely and responsibly so that rodents are controlled effectively but not at the expense of non-target species.

Early next year, assuming a suitable regime can be agreed with the regulators, a new stewardship programme will be introduced for the second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs). This programme is being devised by the industry, coordinated by the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) and this controversial topic was the one chosen for the *Pest Control News* Workshop held during PestTech 2013.

One very clear message stood out and that was that the future for SGARs is far from secure. All users need to engage in the stewardship process or these invaluable products could be lost forever.

Dr Alan Buckle chairman of CRRU provided a whistle-stop tour of how we have got to the point where a stewardship programme has to be developed. Then, Alan along with a panel consisting of BPCA chief executive Simon Forrester, NPTA chairman Iain Turner and Dave Oldbury representing the CIEH National Pest Advisory Panel (NPAP), chaired by Killgerm managing director Rupert Broome, fielded questions.

Reasons are now academic

To be frank the reasons why a stewardship programme must be developed are now academic. It no longer matters whether we agree that rodenticides are persistent bioaccumulative & toxic, carcinogenic mutagenic and reprotoxic and causing

significant secondary poisoning in wildlife.

The fact is that the European Parliament, the European Commission, the UK Government and the HSE have asked for stewardship and if the industry doesn't knuckle-down and produce a workable system, then they will impose their own restrictions.

The good news is that provided stewardship is introduced, the HSE has more or less said it will be happy to approve all SGARs for use in and around buildings and at a distance as far away from the buildings that is judged necessary to gain control of a rodent infestation. So, all the fuss recently about five metre restrictions seems to have been knocked on the head.

Stewardship will apply to all users

Stewardship will apply to all rodenticide usage sectors – gamekeeping, agriculture, amateur and professional pest control. For each usage sector a group has been formed to work out the detail of the stewardship required.

After some discussion about the problems of amateur use the audience was reminded that all sectors must pull together and that it is our job as professionals to sort out our own sector.

One topic which continues to cause considerable confusion is permanent perimeter baiting. Dr Buckle explained that it is unfortunate that the 35-day advice on



CEPA's Roland Higgins

labels has been shortened to the 35-day rule as it is not a rule, it is advice. If after 35 days of baiting a rodent problem has not been controlled then it is essential to re-assess the situation. If you can justify continued baiting then you can continue, but you do need a good reason.

Speaking from the floor, Roland Higgins from the European Confederation of Pest control Associations (CEPA) summed up the situation well and received a round of applause for his comments:

"I ask you to support this stewardship initiative. Looking at the bigger picture we are not just under scrutiny we are under attack. This is a textbook example of what to do, cooperate and self-regulate to avoid the imposition of outside restrictions. And, because the British civil service is very influential in the Environment Directorate in Brussels, what happens in the UK is also likely to happen in the rest of Europe."

To conclude, we must not kid ourselves, if we do not get our act together, there will be severe restrictions on the use of SGARs. We might even lose them altogether.

Together could we be stronger?



Time for all our associations to combine?

With talk of a merger between trade associations in the UK facilities management sector and moves to strengthen ties between two of the key pest management trade groups in the USA, is it time for the UK pest management industry to follow suit? Associate editor Helen Riby looks at where we are today and suggests that it may be time to think the unthinkable!

Unite or die! United we stand! Strength in unity! If that sounds like a diehard 1970s trade unionist there is a lot of truth in those phrases, even if we do now see them as over-worked clichés.

Throughout history there is plenty of evidence to show that, when like-minded groups of people band together, they are stronger and achieve more; much more. Such thinking is the basis of all trade associations, whether they are representing bankers, retailers or the pest management industry.

A strong trade association, able to speak for its entire industry, is definitely something governments and regulators welcome. In return that industry gets more influence on policy and regulation than any individual business could ever have. The same goes for journalists and broadcasters. They like a central point of contact and through them there is an opportunity to influence the public at large. Then, of course there are more basic benefits such as the purchasing power to get better rates on things like insurance and training. And let's not forget associations also have the ability to employ experts so members can access expertise which they might not be able to afford in their own right.

Doing more together

This ability to do more by banding together must have been part of the driving force behind the establishment of the Industrial Pest Control Association, which held its first meeting at the Great Eastern Hotel, Liverpool Street, London in 1942. This association was renamed the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) in 1969 and that makes BPCA, at 71, the longest standing association in UK pest control. Incidentally it also makes it one of the oldest pest control associations in the world

If you were to look at the BPCA as an industry outsider, what you would see is, in many respects a good example of the sort of association that governments want to deal with. This is because it draws its 'full' membership from more than one part of the pest management sector – not only the pest control servicing companies but also consultants, manufacturers and distributors. It promotes professionalism and has systems in place to ensure members are 'up to scratch'. Up until relatively recently, local authorities could not join as full members but these days that gap in representation has been closed so it would seem BPCA can now speak for the whole industry. But there is a problem with that assumption. A lot of individual pest professionals have chosen to join another

association. The story is that by 1993 there was a growing desire amongst the smaller businesses and individual technicians, especially those working in local authorities, to have a 'voice' of their own. These groups were either excluded from BPCA or felt that BPCA was 'too expensive' and 'basically not for them'. The result was the launch of the Midlands Pest Technicians Association, which within six months had to change its name to the National Pest Technicians Association (NPTA) as technicians from all over the country wanted to sign up.

Members are the people who do pest control

NPTA is primarily a grouping of the people who actually do pest control – private pest control servicing companies, individual technicians in the public or private sector and self-employed pest controllers. However, it also includes manufacturers and distributors meaning that many companies are members of both associations.

Again imagine you are an outsider – NPTA just like BPCA also represents a wide cross section of the pest control industry. However, it doesn't have the same clout as BPCA for one fundamental reason – it has to operate on a much more limited budget. Lack of funds means it has to rely to a great extent on volunteers; most of whom have full-time jobs to do as well. This isn't to say that NPTA doesn't do a great job. It does, but its limited means does restrict what can be achieved.

But BPCA and NPTA are not alone in representing the interests of our industry. Although a professional body, so not strictly a trade association, the National Pest Advisory Panel (NPAP) advises the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) on pest management issues and the potential impact of these on public and environmental health. This makes it another grouping representing pest management and a very influential one to boot, especially within government departments and agencies. It was formed in 2001 and has 20 appointed pest management experts drawn from the environmental health profession, the wider pest management industry and academia, as well as from government agencies.

Then there's the UK Pest Controllers Organisation (UKPCO) which, in its current form was set-up in 2006. This is a much smaller group of like-minded pest management professionals – both sole traders and small businesses. It was the first association to insist that all members be signed-up to BASIS PROMPT as a means of proving competence and commitment to professional development.



These four – BPCA, NPFA, UKPCO and NPAP – have attempted to come together under the umbrella of The Pest Management Alliance. But, apart from a couple of joint codes of practice, one published in 2010 and the other in 2012, there is little evidence that this alliance is delivering.

Whilst the Alliance is still alive, its website doesn't tell you much and, ever since its formation, there have been rumours of grumblings such as 'why do all four associations get an equal vote despite the variation in the number of members they represent?' Comments have also been picked-up along the lines of 'there is unlikely to be much progress until two of the associations stop bickering and focus on where they have common ground, rather than on how often they can disagree.'

But maybe the problem is that the Pest Management Alliance has rather too loose a remit. In the development of the European standard for Pest Management Services, known as the CEN project, all of these groups and more such as BASIS and RSPH have been invited to join the the CEN UK Mirror Committee and have successfully worked together in a common cause to develop the draft standard.

Plenty of other membership groups

Added to this mix there are plenty of other membership organisations including: CRUU – the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use, launched in May 2005 and its associated Think Wildlife scheme; RAMPS UK – the Register of Accredited Metallic Phosphides Schemes, which first appeared in its current form in November 2010; the Wildlife Management Association (WMA), set up in May 2012 and the Association of Urban Wildlife Professionals, launched this July.

Indeed some pests – well moles to be specific – have their own associations – lots of them! There's the Association of Professional Mole Catchers, the Guild of British Molecatchers, the Traditional British Molecatchers Register and Mole Catcher UK and that was just from one quick Google search!

Talk about fragmented. It seems that when a new issue rears its head, or when one group decides it doesn't like what another is doing, the industry acts a bit like one of the lowest forms of life, the amoeba, and simply lops a bit off and a new 'association' is born. Whilst it's easy to understand the reasons why each individual grouping has come about, and they all have very laudable aims and objectives, you do have to question the sense of it all.

To be frank all this fragmentation only serves to dilute the industry's voice whether it is negotiating with legislators or promoting the industry to other commercial sectors, or indeed the general public or getting discount deals for members. It is worth remembering too that at a European level, the Commission and Parliament will only deal

with European Organisations hence the important role for CEPA, the Confederation of European Pest Management Organisations.

If you want the considered opinion of the UK pest management sector which group do you speak to? If you need to choose a pest controller where do you go for advice? And, if you are new to UK pest management which association(s) do you join?

Too small to have so many representatives

And all this in an industry which really is very small. Yes this industry may be important to us but pest control is a minnow in UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) terms. In the Pest survey of surveys report (see Pest Issue 25 January & February 2013), it was concluded that the UK pest control products & servicing market is worth approaching £350 million. Now that might sound like a big number, especially if it was in your personal bank account, but, compared to other sectors, let alone GDP, it is tiny.

To put it into context, in 2012 the UK retail sector was worth £311 billion (that's £311,000 million i.e. 888 times bigger than UK pest control). With the UK economy worth around £1.56 trillion or £1,560,000 million, pest control accounts for just 0.02% of GDP. The retail sector is worth a thousand times more, accounting for around 20% of UK GDP and, through the British Retail Consortium, it speaks with one voice and thereby wields enormous power. Yes, there are individual associations for some parts of the retail sector but they all seem able to manage to agree on the things that matter, so why does pest control find it so hard?

So come on, BPCA, NPFA, UKPCO, CIEH-NPAP and all the other voices of the pest management industry, isn't it time you pooled your resources and found a united voice. Of course that is much easier to write than to achieve. Getting people in pest control to agree is a bit like herding cats! But maybe, just maybe some progress could be made if everyone tried to remember there is a great deal of truth in the phrase - **United we stand, divided we fall.**





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No hiding place! Time to move on

Studying aggregation and dispersal behaviour in the common bed bug

Understand how a pest infestation develops and spreads and you're well on the way to building a successful management strategy. Bed bug expert Dr Richard Naylor has been examining these key questions and his results on bed bugs dispersal have important implications for control strategies.

Studying how infestations develop and spread is fundamentally important for designing effective control strategies. But when the species in question is a bed bug, this presents some unique challenges. Aside from the ethical implications of allowing an infestation to develop and spread for the purposes of research, it is extremely difficult to study a species known for its cryptic behaviour in an environment as complex as a bedroom.

To resolve this problem, Dr Richard Naylor (formerly of The University of Sheffield) has devised a set of three metre long arenas, complete with artificial hosts and hiding



Dr Richard Naylor

places. These arenas are large enough to house populations of over 700 bed bugs under near-natural conditions, allowing him to observe and measure their aggregation and dispersal behaviour in a carefully controlled laboratory setting.

"The arenas may seem on the large side, but it is crucial that the bed bugs are able to move around on a scale comparable to that of a natural infestation," explained Richard.

"Studying aggregation and dispersal behaviour in a Petri dish would be meaningless for a species accustomed to travelling several metres to obtain each meal."

In natural infestations bed bugs aggregate in



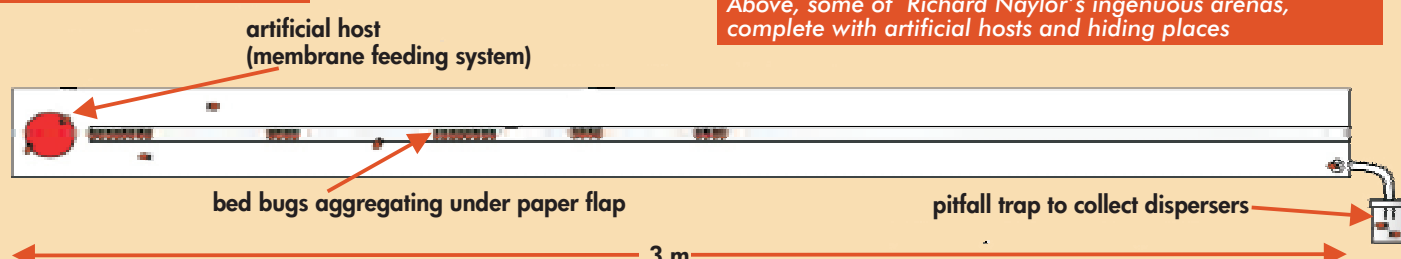
narrow crevices, such as in the bed frame and around the headboard. To provide the laboratory bed bugs with a suitable crevice the arenas were fitted with a long, narrow paper flap, which was secured to the base of the arena. This paper flap can be considered analogous to the peeling edge of wallpaper – a common bed bug hideout.

"The main advantage of this linear ▶▶▶

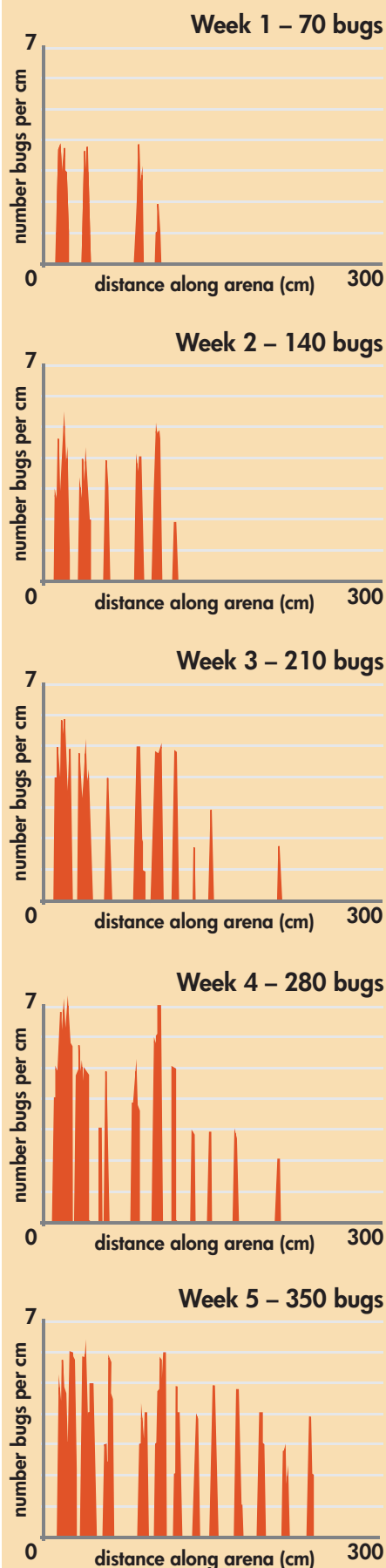


Above, some of Richard Naylor's ingenious arenas, complete with artificial hosts and hiding places

The basic arena set-up



Distribution of bed bugs in arena 1



crevice design was that the location of every bug could be recorded by its distance along the arena in one dimension which dramatically simplified the analysis," explained Richard.

Bed bugs wishing to disperse from the 'laboratory infestations' had the opportunity to do so via a short length of rubber tubing into a pitfall trap situated at the end furthest from the artificial host. This tubing is analogous to an electrical conduit, which is a common dispersal route for bed bugs. By trapping the dispersers it is possible to determine which individuals from the population are dispersing, which in turn can help to establish what drives bed bugs to disperse.

Aggregation patterns

In the arena set-up, just as in natural infestations, bed bugs form discrete aggregations. But what happens if you double the number of bed bugs? Do you get twice the number of aggregations, or do the aggregations just increase in size to absorb the extra bugs? To better understand the dynamics of how these aggregations form and change with increasing population size, 10 unfed adult bed bugs were released into each of three replicate arenas at daily intervals. At weekly intervals the locations of all of the bed bugs were recorded by their distance along the arena. In addition to this the cumulative number of dispersing bed bugs was also recorded.

Results

The number of bed bugs in every centimetre of the crevice was plotted as a frequency distribution, producing an easy graphical representation of the changing distributions of bed bugs in each arena over time (data shown for arena 1 only).

The sequence of distributions shows some clear patterns in the way bed bug aggregations develop. Firstly, bed bugs occupied a patchy distribution, preferring to reside in multiple smaller aggregations than a single large one. Furthermore, the size of the aggregations was fairly consistent

(approx. 20-40 bed bugs in each), but the number of aggregations increased proportionally with population size. The reason for this is not known. It may be a mechanism for avoiding pathogen transfer or detection by the host. Alternatively, it may be caused by females avoiding aggregations with large numbers of males as a way of avoiding unwanted male attention.

In small populations, the aggregations are always in the region of the crevice closest to the host, but as the population increases, they begin to occupy sites at increasingly peripheral locations. This suggests that hiding places in close proximity to the host are preferred.

There was no dispersal from any of the arenas until week six at which point the most peripheral bed bugs in each arena were in aggregations more than 2.5 metres from the artificial host. The lack of available crevice space in the vicinity of the host may therefore be an important factor in driving dispersal.

The influence of crevice availability

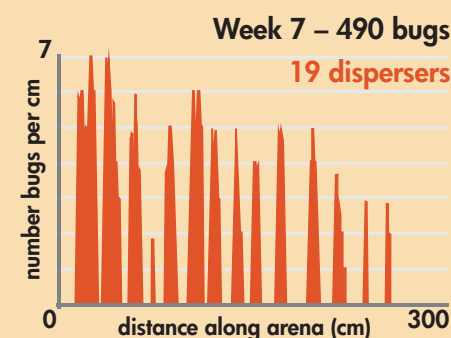
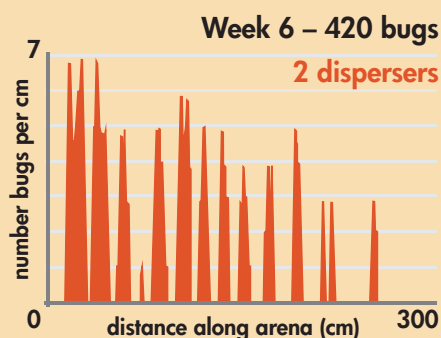
To test if crevice availability influences the time to the onset of dispersal, arenas were set up with one, two or three parallel crevice strips. This effectively doubled and tripled the available crevice space relative to the basic arena layout.

As in the previous experiment, 10 unfed adult bed bugs were released daily into each of three replicates of the three arena layouts (single, double and triple crevice). The cumulative number of dispersers was also recorded at daily intervals.

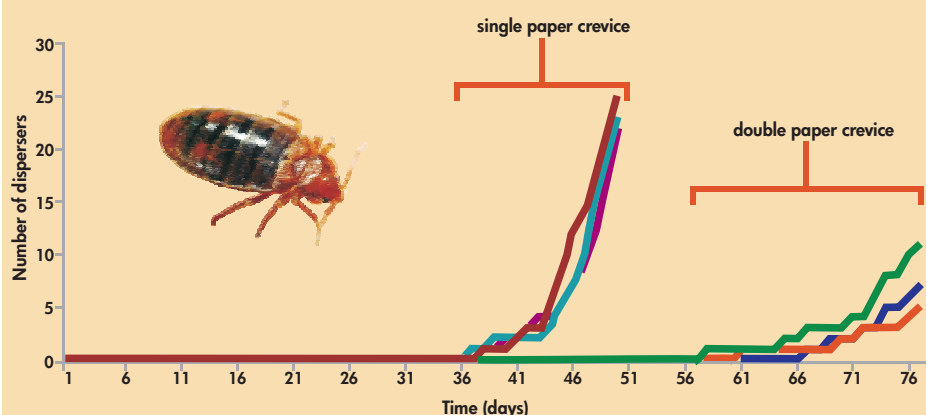
Results

Doubling the amount of available crevice space significantly delayed the onset of dispersal from around day 36 to around day 61. By day 77, when the experiment was terminated, there had still not been any dispersal from the triple crevice arenas.

This experiment provides very clear evidence that the availability of suitable hiding places



Comparison of bed bug dispersal rates – single paper crevice v double paper crevice



is an important factor in the decision to disperse.

Control attempts can aid dispersion

These results have important implications for control strategies. Sparse, uncluttered environments are generally considered preferential for bed bug control. For this reason caulks and sealants are often used to eliminate hiding places around the bed, and encasements may also be installed to eliminate hiding places within the structure of the bed.

While this approach can simplify treatment of minor infestations, it is also likely to contribute to more rapid dispersal to neighbouring flats and buildings if the infestations are not identified and controlled in the very early stages. Furthermore, eliminating hiding places in the bed, forces the bed bugs to occupy cracks and crevices elsewhere in the room, producing a more scattered and potentially more complex infestation to treat.

The solution? The use of monitors?

One option when employing the strategy of eliminating potential hiding places is to provide an alternative crevice structure for

bed bugs to hide in. There are a number of bed bug monitoring devices on the market designed specifically to appeal to the bed bug's crevice-seeking nature. On their own, these monitors have mixed success, because they have to compete with all the other potential hiding places around the bed.

However, these crevice-mimicking monitors should work synergistically with the strategy of eliminating crevices. The success of the



monitors should be greatly improved by eliminating most of the alternative hiding places. Likewise, the success of the crevice-eliminating strategy should be improved by providing bed bugs with a suitable hiding place in the vicinity of the host, helping to ensure that any infestations that do arise will be localised to the monitor, easily detectable and slow to disperse to neighbouring rooms.

Summary of other findings

Using the same set-up it has been possible to test a number of other hypotheses about bed bug aggregation and dispersal behaviour.

- 1 Females do not disperse to avoid males, as has been previously suggested. Males and females disperse in approximately equal numbers and female dispersal was unaffected by the sex ratio of the population.
- 2 There was evidence of uneven sex ratios (although not quite statistically significant) between the harbourages, which may indicate female avoidance of males within the infestation.
- 3 Bed bugs are not faithful to particular aggregations. By marking bed bugs from particular aggregations with enamel paint, it was possible to determine that they move around between aggregations rather than returning to the same one every time.

This research was conducted as part of a doctorate degree. For more details of the methodology and findings of this research, the full thesis can be downloaded from: http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/2244/1/Naylor_Richard.pdf

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Freedom of (mis) information

Mark Twain's well known adage 'Lies, damned lies, and statistics' will ring loud and clear to anyone in the industry who has found themselves caught-up in the 'shocking revelations' published following Freedom of Information Act requests. Editor Frances McKim examines the dilemma it often causes.

Hackney Gazette
Hackney is top five UK hot spot for mice infestation callouts

St Helens the reporter
Row over pest control report

Sutton Coldfield Observer
Birmingham is the rat capital of the UK survey reveals

YORKSHIRE POST
Revealed: Cockroaches, flies and rats that infest Leeds hospitals

By way of background, the aim of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) is give the public 'right of access' to any recorded information on any subject held by the public sector. It costs nothing to make a request but public authorities can charge for, or decline, a request if providing the information will cost more than £600 (central government) or £450 (other public authorities). £25 is the standard hourly rate used to calculate staff costs of answering requests. The Local Government Association has calculated local authorities spend £31.7m every year on requests. In the NHS, one recent estimate put the cost at £30m.

At individual council level, Birmingham City Council calculated that FOIA cost it £800,000 in 2012. Hampshire County Council said £365,000 in 2010. What else could they do with that money? More social workers, more school inspectors, more spent on road maintenance.

BPCA report lead to council bashing

Leaving the costs aside, it's what happens to the information once acquired that's important. National and even regional media, love bad news. So it was no surprise that local authority pest control units again took a bashing when the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) published its second national survey in early October 2013.

After vociferous complaints from local authorities last year, BPCA did try, in its press release, to add some perspective to the figures with Simon Forrester saying: "There may be a number of local factors why certain areas feature so prominently at the top of some of these tables."

However, all reason was lost and the inevitable headlines followed claiming that such and such a town was the rat capital of the UK, or the UK's pest hotspot etc, etc.

Taken at face value the figures published by BPCA do look bad. But that is only half the story. Those of us in the know are well

aware that provision of local authority pest control services over the country is far from uniform – some councils offer free treatments, some make charges, some contract them out and others do nothing. These variations in approach will naturally be reflected in the figures – if you offer a free service the call-out figures for your council will be high – but this doesn't mean your area is any more infested than another with lower call-outs – in fact the reverse may well reflect the situation better.

Councils hit back

Some councils have hit back, whilst they agree the figures published are correct, they have tried to put them into context.

For example, St Helens Council in Lancashire was ranked 12th in the country for call-outs. They acknowledged the BPCA's figures were accurate, but said they were misleading as the council offers many free services which other authorities do not.

A St Helens Council spokesman said: "Unfortunately this is a pretty misleading analysis that fails to compare like with like and they fail to include any context. We are proud to offer free treatments for public health pests (including rats, mice, fleas, bed bugs and cockroaches, which are proven carriers of disease). However many authorities charge for all except rat treatments. This results in a far lower demand for council pest control services in those areas."

Nearby Wigan Council, ranked 20th, also fought back with Alan Blundell, assistant director of regulation services, saying: "We welcome this report as it demonstrates how effective Wigan Council's pest control service is. Wigan has a team of dedicated pest control officers and a reporting process which has been designed to make it easy for residents and businesses to let us know of any problem with pests."

Another pest control unit has been caught

up in a different set of FOIA revelations. The pest control unit at Leeds City Council has the contract for pest control services for hospitals in Leeds. The headline in the *Yorkshire Post*, which lodged the FOIA request, read: "Pest control has been summoned to hospitals in Leeds 771 times over the past two and a half years to deal with a grim catalogue of vermin."

Does this sort of reporting really do any good? All that happens is residents get upset



Leeds General – a Victorian building like this is always going to have pest problems

and contractors are 'hauled over the coals'.

Broken down, the figures mean there were, over the years in question, six call-outs per week, many of which are likely to have been false alarms, reported over several sites, which includes the massive Leeds General Infirmary which opened its doors in 1869.

Defra in hot water

Amusingly, an FOIA request to the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) for details on its expenditure on pest control at department buildings got the Department into hot water. It revealed that during the period April 2012 to April 2013 over 11 sites, £454,709 was spent in total. Nearly 95% of this going to Nobel House in Westminster to treat their widely reported clothes moth problem!

PestTech turns 21

Held on 6 November at the usual National Motorcycle Museum venue, PestTech celebrated its 21st year in style.



The PCN workshop was packed to debate the future for second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides



New for 2013, was the chance to try your hand in the airgun rifle range, thanks to the Airgun Training & Education Organisation (ATEO) and BSA

With balloons galore and even a pest control cake, PestTech 2013 was in just about everyone's opinion a grand day out. Some grumbings about traffic problems were soon forgotten and the organisers, National Pest Technicians Association (NPTA), can hardly be blamed for the state of the UK's roads. From the exhibitors' perspective the slow traffic allowed for a more steady flow of visitors, rather than the more usual stampede, when the doors opened at 09.00.

The format for the day followed the tried and tested one with the usual mix of exhibition stands, outdoor demonstrations and indoor seminars.

New faces on show

It was interesting to note some of the new companies present who will no doubt be looking to give some of the older companies a bit of a shake! New distributor PestFix, had a small presence last year, but this year were there in force with a bigger stand and a product new to them, the original JJ Bio Bird Free gel.

Control Zone Products manufacture all their EFK's here in the UK, or should we say God's own county, Yorkshire. They would! The stand and giveaway T-shirts proudly displayed their 'Made in Sheffield' credentials.

Vectorfog also made a first-time appearance. With headquarters in Korea and a UK office in Farnham, the company supplies fogging equipment and also, through its online Vectorshop, chemical products to go with the machines. And, the company claims, all at very competitive prices.

New companies there might have been but there were, unfortunately, no scintillating new product launches this year.

Less was more in the seminars

The seminar programme was kept shorter than in more recent years to give people chance to get round all the stands, see the demonstrations and still have some time to network. That new formula seemed to work with most sessions very well attended. Your editorial team certainly appreciated not having to run up



Syngenta had a special offer on Demand CS



Lots of interest was shown in BSA's guns



Bed bug detection dog, Alfie



Despite the dismal weather, the enthusiasm of first-time mole trap demonstrator, Jeff Nichols, left, was not dampened even if his audience was a little wet under foot. Pesties are made of sterner stuff and the outdoor demos were generally well attended.

and down the steps to the Crow's Nest suite quite so often.

The session by Jackie Duggan from Public Health England set the tone for the day with plenty of people listening to her outline of the UK study into the risk of hantavirus infection to pest controllers.

The health & safety and risk assessments presentation by HS Direct's James Murphy was also well received, as folk clearly appreciate that whilst the paperwork is judged by most as boring, it is important.

Making more money from wasps by focussing on preventing wasp stings, was the theme for the seminar by WaspBane's Karol Pazik and Peter Rigby from Trust K9 spoke about bed bug detection dogs. His session included an impressive demonstration by bed bug detection dog, Alfie.

In previous years the gods have usually looked after PestTech with some bright and sunny weather – but this year someone must have done something to upset them. However, in true British spirit neither

demonstrators, nor their audience, were put off by a drop of rain.

SGARs debated

As ever, the *Pest Control News* workshop was well supported. The topic of stewardship for the second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) was a big draw. Those attending heard how the future of these essential tools is still far from secure.

In previous years the workshop would have been chaired by Killgerm's Jonathan Peck who always loved the cut and thrust of a good debate. This year managing director, Rupert Broome, took centre stage.

Oh, by the way, that magnificent PestTech cake was the work of Angela Jakeman, the wife of NPTA board member Gary Jakeman of Pied Piper Pest & Wildlife Management in Solihull, West Midlands.



Korean company, Vectorfog, exhibited for the first time...



...as did Control Zone Products from Sheffield

read more
on the web
WWW



Established distributors SX...



... new distributors PestFix



On the Lodi stand but still not missing any calls



Fun & games at PestTech

PestTech is always a lively event, but this year, to celebrate the event's 21st, several exhibitors came-up trumps and really got into the fun and games.

For the lucky ones, there were certainly plenty of prizes too. Our quick review, starting with the picture top left and then moving anti-clockwise, gives those who weren't there a chance to see what they missed!



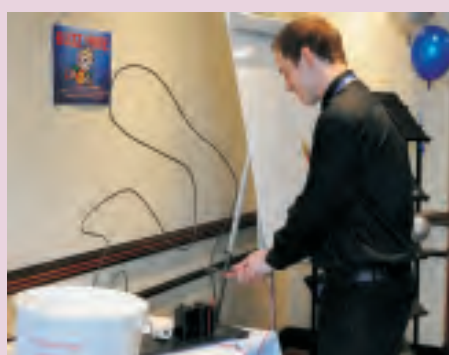
It was magnetic darts on the Control Zone Products stand. Anyone who scored over 60 with the three darts went home with a trendy 'Made in Sheffield' t-shirt. Then, how about a game of pontoon with Barretine? If you could beat the dealer. Adam Williams landed this 'onerous' task, you could have picked-up some sweets if you won once, or a Muskil torch if you pulled it off four times.



NPTA had requested tombola prizes and the exhibitors all chipped in. The tombola, and the wiggly buzz wire together, raised over £700 which has all gone to the Russell IPM Foundation in support of Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research. They too had a raffle on their stand for a Christmas hamper and raised just over £600. As usual, Russell has generously matched this funding. Oh! Graham Crowe won the hamper – was this something of a fix!

BASF ran a test of skill on their stand – who was quickest at placing a 3-4mm dab of Goliath gel on to the 160 squares which made up the numbers 21. Some 70 pesties tackled this, but Stoke City Council pest control technician, Su Goodwin, proved herself the fastest so winning a fantastic supercar driving experience for two.

Just a bit of fun. Moley popped-out of the PestTech birthday cake to say hello, and Liam Brinded looked as if he had just won the cuddly toy off a TV show! Hope the rabbits aren't this size in your patch? Killgerm extended their James Bond theme with a competition centred around Bond girls and for anyone with a steady hand, you could tackle the wiggly buzz wire. Organised by NPTA, the handsome prize of two bottles of wine and kit to go with them, was presented by Iain Turner to who knows who? Was it you? Do let us know.



Pest controllers give blood to aid hantavirus research



NPTA Board members lead by example providing blood samples to Public Health England's hantavirus team

Public Health England (PHE) is conducting a UK-wide study to determine the possible risk of hantavirus infection. With pest controllers one of the groups at risk, PestTech was a great opportunity for them to ask for volunteers to assist in the research.

Each volunteer was asked to give a small blood sample and to complete a short questionnaire. The blood was subsequently tested for the presence of antibodies to gauge the level of exposure.

Leading by example were some NPTA board members. They were soon followed by a constant stream of volunteers and a fantastic total of 89 people took part over the course of the day.



Brian Duffin, technical manager for Hampshire-based Rokill was one of those who volunteered. "All the staff from PHE were extremely professional and the blood sampling was virtually identical to one taken by your own GP, so hardly a 'Tony Hancock armful!' I felt it was very relevant to participate as hantavirus is not a nice disease, so it's important to establish a baseline for the disease prevalence in the UK."

Hantaviruses are a group of viruses found worldwide that can cause serious diseases in humans. They are naturally carried by rodents which are asymptomatic – meaning the rodent is carrying the infection but experiences no symptoms. However, rodents shed the virus in their urine, faeces and saliva, resulting in infection of humans either through exposure to rodent droppings – inhaled in droplets and dry dust – or via direct contact through handling rodents. All scenarios common to pest controllers.


Good practices, such as wearing gloves, washing hands before eating, changing outdoor clothes at the end of the day and by wearing a mask, in particularly dusty or infested areas, will all help prevent infection.

The team would be grateful to hear from any further potential volunteers and can arrange to go to a workplace to test if several staff are interested. Email hantavirus_study@phe.gov.uk

Sampling is expected to be completed by January 2014 with results on prevalence due next summer.


Russell IPM
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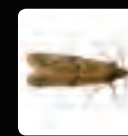



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World's biggest pest event

Promoted as the international meeting place for the pest management industry, PestWorld 2013 lived-up to its billing. The event was organised by the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) and ran from 22 to 25 October. The 2013 show saw over 3,000 delegates from around 40 countries descending upon the very pleasantly warm, but somewhat sleepy, city of Phoenix, Arizona.

For a more detailed account of activities at PestWorld, please read our special news stories all put together in the **Pest+ International** report on the **Pest** website. Here we give you a quick photographic tour of some of the other highlights – you may be surprised to see how many faces from the UK industry you recognise.

read more
on the web
www.pestmagazine.co.uk



It wouldn't be PestWorld without keynote motivational speakers. Jordan Belfort, left, presented his life history and business philosophy. Maybe one not to copy, but go to see the film based on his life, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, opening in early 2014



Time for the technical sessions was reduced, so permitting extended exhibition opening hours. The sessions covered all aspects of pest control. Dr Faith Oi from the University of Florida speculated what life would be like without pest control



Leading the charge from the UK. A full team-turnout from P+L Systems



Launched first at PestEx 2013, the XL8 telescopic lance developed by Lance Lab in Northern Ireland, makes its US debut on the Birchmeier stand as demonstrated by company chairman, Jürg Zwahlen



PestWest – a shining performance in any language. Bling hits the world of EFKs! Left to right are: Sabra Fearon, Rupert Broome, Peter Kitson and Veronica Wood Querales



An uninvited guest!

Left: Now quite old-hands at PestWorld. Based in Alton, Hampshire the PelGar business in the USA has flourished via their distributor AB Bait. Nic Blaszkowicz (left) and Dr Gareth Caple-Williams are joined by Gerwyn Jones, who has recently taken over responsibility for their business in Australasia



Surrounded by desert, the sun nearly always seems to shine on Phoenix

PEST WORLD 2013



Proud to be British and made in Sheffield. Matt Haslam (second from the left) of Control Zone Products was always keen to highlight this manufacturing feature of his fly killers



PestWorld first-timers – Rat Pak Engineering from Lincoln have set-up a USA base and were introducing their tamper and vandal resistant steel bait stations. Jim Butcher (above left) explains all



One of life's enthusiasts. Gary McMahon from Australia, the developer of the Bait-Safe, which is sold in the UK by SX. He was demonstrating further new applications, including the addition of bed bug and insect monitoring units



PestWorld always attracts numerous overseas visitors. Above, from Bábolna Bio in Hungary, are Dr Daniel Bajomi and János Daru

Right:
Venturing out
of Phoenix
and your first
question was
where are the
cowboys?



Below: Another first-timer. Headquartered in Korea, VectorFog is keen to promote its range of equipment on the global stage. UK-based Peter Slipenchuk (centre) seen with colleagues

All smiles. Founder of Russell IPM, Dr Shakir Al-Zaidi (right) was on-hand throughout the exhibition to support his US distributor. Seen here with Susan Oakes-Melton and Jim Oakes of JF Oakes



Don't miss our full report from PestWorld. Go to www.pestmagazine.co.uk/content/pestPlus.asp and select Pest+ International PestWorld 2013.



Leading rodenticide regulatory affairs and development specialists, Roger Sharples and Sharon Hughes of BASF Pest Control Solutions provide some timely practical advice on changes which, very soon, are likely to affect the way in which professional pest controllers can use Second-Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs).

All change please

Responding to likely SGAR changes

Following the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) consultations of the past year and subject to an acceptable Second-Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticide (SGAR) stewardship regime, from 2014 the labels of the so-called single feed rodenticides, flocoumaten, brodifacoum and difethialone will no longer confine them to indoor use only. Instead, they will progressively permit UK pest controllers to employ them in and around buildings in the same way as those containing difenacoum and bromadiolone.

But alongside this change comes a clear warning of the need to do more to minimise the impact of all SGARs on non-target species. So what, if any, extra precautions are professional pest controllers thinking of taking in response? And where would they be best advised to focus their efforts to safeguard wildlife and avoid the very real danger of losing SGARs altogether in the future?

Leading rodenticide regulatory affairs and development specialists, Roger Sharples and Sharon Hughes of BASF Pest Control Solutions examine these key questions.

"The important thing to appreciate about any label changes is that they will not restrict the use of any SGAR to within the originally suggested five metres of buildings," explains Roger Sharples. "Nor will it allow them to be used externally away from buildings.

"Instead the definition 'in and around buildings' will apply to the buildings themselves and the areas around them that

need to be treated in order to deal with the infestation of the buildings. It will allow all SGARs to be used in sewer systems or ships but not in waste dumps or other open areas away from buildings like hedgerows farmland, parks or golf courses.

Changes offer new flexibility

"This flexibility is vital to enable pest controllers to employ single feed rodenticides to deal with challenging rat infestations," he points out. "Particularly those where resistance to other SGARs is known or suspected," he suggests.

"But the external use of a wider range of rodenticides brings a new dimension to the risk of accidental poisoning of pets, non-target rodents, and birds – both raptors that could prey on poisoned rodents and seed feeders that may consume baits directly."

This places the onus on everyone involved to step-up their efforts to minimise such risks by the way they use rodenticides as the label changes take effect from 2014. Especially

so, as the industry's performance under the new stewardship regime will be closely scrutinised by those most concerned about the effects of rodenticides on wildlife.

SGARs still under threat

"The regulatory position of SGARs remains tenuous in the extreme," Roger Sharples stresses. "Even if rodenticide residues within key wildlife indicators continue at the current level we may still lose our right to use them. This would be unthinkable."

To meet HSE's needs, the industry's Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) has been charged with developing proposals with relevant stakeholders for the required SGAR stewardship regime. These should define best practice for all user groups and include arrangements for monitoring success and for ensuring the required practice is actually adhered to.

The latest UK National Pest Management Survey undertaken by **pest** and BASF Pest Control Solutions this spring shows that pest controllers across the country fully intend to play their stewardship part by taking extra care to safeguard non-target species (Figure 1).

What is more, they clearly identify specific precautions they plan to take across the

Figure 1: Number of extra precautions planned by PCOs to safeguard non-target species

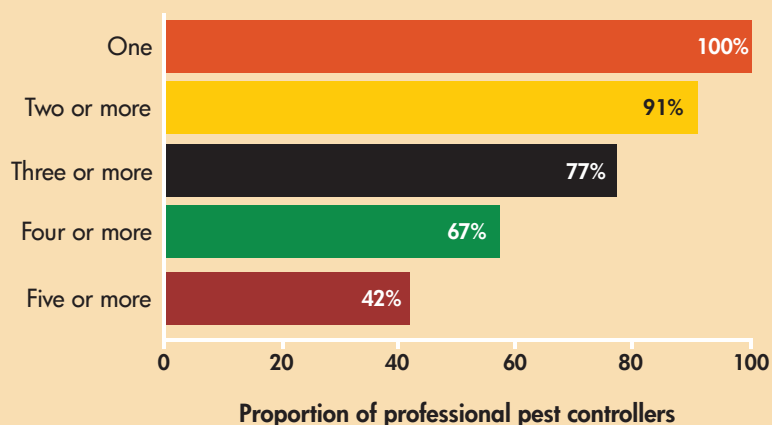
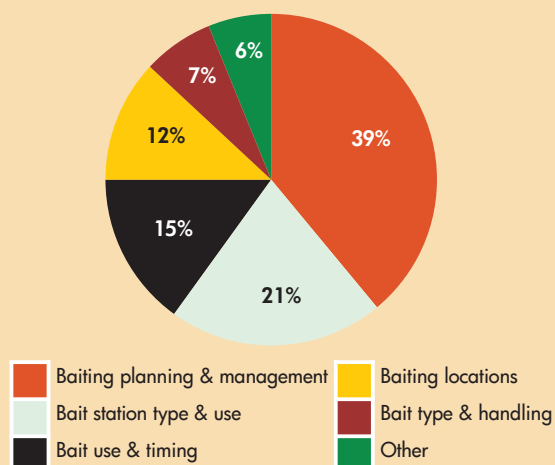


Figure 2: Specific extra precautions planned by PCOs to safeguard non-target species



whole spectrum of baiting practice from bait planning and management to bait station type and use, bait use and timing, baiting locations, and bait type and handling (Figure 2).

Most popular among the precautions being planned are improvements in bait stations; in the frequency and thoroughness of visits, inspections and carcass removal; in the undertaking of risk assessments and non-target species checks; in careful location of bait stations; in restricting the length of baiting; in limiting use to situations where control is the most problematic; and in better site surveying, planning and record-keeping. Additional safeguards also planned by more than 10% of pest controllers taking part in the survey include anchoring baits in secure baiting points;

thorough removal of baits as soon as possible after treatment; pulse baiting to minimise bait exposure; and better customer education and communication.

Diligence for all rodenticides

Both Roger Sharples and Sharon Hughes are encouraged to see the many ways pest professionals intend tightening-up their baiting practice. But they are adamant that the key to success will be to focus on elements that make the most difference and apply them with real diligence.

While high on pest controllers' list of planned precautions, they stress that effective non-target species protection has to involve far more than the use of tamper-resistant and well-secured bait boxes.

In fact, with the extent to which bait boxes have been shown to reduce rat bait takes, in particular, they consider well-covered and securely-protected bait stations constructed from locally-available materials more appropriate in many situations.

Alongside this and other measures, in the best practice use of all rodenticides 'in and

around buildings', they prioritise careful risk assessment-based baiting, using single feed products only where necessary, in forms other than loose bait and with well-managed pulse baiting regimes, where the label allows.

"Risk assessments, conducted as part of initial site surveys, have to be the starting point for all treatment programmes," Sharon Hughes advises. "But they must be real and thorough, not just tick box exercises. They need to identify whether infested areas can be accessed by dogs, cats, small mammals, birds or people. Equally, they have to be followed by clear and well-documented risk-minimising measures.

"Tamper resistant they may be, but bait boxes in urban areas that can be easily reached by the public are just asking for trouble," she notes.

"So, they should always be placed out-of-sight and, wherever possible, in secure areas.

"Protecting dogs and cats is mainly a matter of using bait stations that are securely



BASF Pest Control Solutions rodenticide experts, Sharon Hughes and Roger Sharples

covered and only have rat-sized access. However, physical exclusion is impossible with small mammals. This makes bait point siting the most critical consideration."

Understand non-target animals

Sharon continues: "Baiting along the perimeter fences of farmsteads, for instance, is an open invitation to the field mice and voles that are a favourite prey for owls and raptors. Place your bait stations in yards and along the sides of buildings, though, and the limited feeding ranges and timidity of these non-targets means they're far less likely to visit. Just like rat and mouse control, protecting non-targets is a matter of understanding the behaviour of the animals involved.

"In this respect quality burrow baiting is an area that may deserve extra exploration," Sharon Hughes believes. "Well inside their front door is about the best place to put bait if you want rats to consume it in preference to other local food sources. The presence of rats also makes it one of the least attractive places for foraging field mice and voles. Particular care, however, must be taken to prevent excavation leading to bait being scattered in the vicinity.

Wherever they are placed, it's important in Roger Sharples' opinion that single feed rodenticides are only used when appropriate – either where infestations haven't been controlled with the best available multi-feed baits or where rats and mice are known to be resistant to the actives in these products.

"Rat treatment presents the greatest non-target species risk since mouse infestations are mostly treated indoors where wildlife access is far more restricted," he explains. "While resistance to multi-feed actives has grown in the UK, our monitoring shows that

most rat populations continue to be susceptible to formulations with enough, well-researched rodent appeal to be taken-up rapidly and in sufficient quantity.

"Where single feed rodenticides are used around buildings rather than just within them, it's important to avoid loose baits," adds Sharon Hughes. "Blocks or pasta baits fastened securely within bait stations present significantly less danger of being removed by foraging rodents and left exposed for pets or wildlife to find them.

"Pulse baiting is another important essential with single feed rodenticides. Taking advantage of the potency of the active and the natural feeding behaviour of rat populations, it enables restricted amounts of bait put out in regular weekly cycles to be as effective as conventional 'saturation' baiting with the less potent multi-feed products.

"Yet our comparisons of pulse baiting with Storm Secure (flocoumafen) and conventional baiting with bromadiolone show the single feed option cuts the length of time the bait is in the environment by almost 40% as well as requiring barely a quarter the amount of bait and half as many application visits."

So, single feed rodenticides do have a place. The final decision about what to use where, is a balancing act – faster acting and less but more potent bait, or carefully sited quality multi-feed products. With the label changes proposed pest controllers will be required to use their professional expertise to decide which is most suitable rather than being confined to using particular actives because of regulatory restrictions.

In addition to these measures, Roger Sharples and Sharon Hughes underline the importance of thorough, regular inspection

during all treatments to relocate or remove altogether bait points that show little or no signs of rat activity and remove carcasses at every opportunity, stressing that you only find carcasses if you really seek them out.

Thorough removal of baits immediately after treatment is another essential in their view. While baiting can continue beyond the 35 days assumed to be sufficient to obtain control with good treatment practice, they stress this must be justified by professional investigation.

And don't forget record keeping

"We strongly recommend full records are kept of all site visits, risk assessments and actions to overcome specific challenges as well as products used and bait point locations," suggested Roger. "Apart from anything else, this provides users with the protection they need if anything goes wrong.

"PCOs also need to work with their customers in taking active steps to make their premises less attractive to and welcoming of rats. Eliminate nearby rat nesting sites by clearing away rubbish and debris from rough ground. Remove vegetation in close proximity to buildings to deny rats the cover they always seek. Rodent-proof buildings to make it difficult for them to enter. And keep the most attractive foodstuffs securely stored out of easy access.

"A highly experienced West Midlands pest controller with whom we work closely has found that reducing the attractiveness of farm environments in these simple ways can all but eliminate rat problems. Taken with the other steps we have outlined, this will ensure the integrated pest management that has to be the most effective and economic as well as most responsible approach to modern rodent control."

When baiting in urban areas bait boxes need to be sited well away from the public and ideally in a secure area, advises Sharon Hughes, otherwise you are just asking for trouble





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Have you seen?

A close encounter with a now rare pest

The pages of the popular press often seem to be filled with reported sightings of new, weird and wonderful pests. Take the recent flurry of excitement over the supposed reports of false widow spiders. In **Pest** magazine (issue 28 August & September 2013) we reported on the rumoured arrival of the Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*). In this article, Chris Swindells of the Acheta Consultancy recalls a recent real-life encounter with a pretty rare pest.

Whilst working for Acheta it is unsurprising to find pest infestation issues as a result of failings in building fabric, hygiene, housekeeping or pest control service.

Most infestations we come across involve the usual suspects, and many have gone undetected, or have been ignored, until an incident occurs. Sometimes, the surprise is how long the issue has persisted, with obvious causes being overlooked and extravagant riddance programmes proposed.

However, recently, whilst working on a site adjacent to the Thames estuary, I found myself in a strange situation. Were my eyes deceiving me, or was there something not quite right about the droppings I had just found (that's the droppings on the right hand side of the photo opposite).



Acheta's Chris Swindells



© Chris Swindells

© Dr. Reiner Pospischil

Recent inspection reports had not documented anything untoward and, although there had been historical issues with rat activity, nothing in the documentation indicated the possibility of anything other than Norway rat activity.

Was this a simple case of incorrect reporting or, perhaps, due to the lack of documented black rat (*Rattus rattus*) activity in the UK, are our pest control operatives treating all rat infestations as Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*)? Are we automatically programmed to assume that we are always dealing with that ubiquitous species?

After finding the droppings in one area of the premises, it was even more surprising to actually then see a live rat running along a roof support beam. This rat did not look like all the other rats that I have seen in my career.

For a start, the tail was **VERY** long. To say I was excited (sad, I know) was an understatement! Surprisingly, the rat obliged me with the opportunity to record it in action.

More widespread than we think?

Camera angles and focus can be misleading (as anyone who has seen some of the national newspaper articles relating to super rats will verify). However, in this instance I have the droppings, and a sighting of a rat with a very long tail. *Rattus rattus* I presume; what do you think?

Following the excitement, I started to wonder; how widespread *Rattus rattus* actually is in the UK. Are there other black rat infestations that are being misidentified? Assuming that *Rattus rattus* is so rare in the UK, perhaps we should wonder why, particularly as they are still relatively common in mainland Europe. Dr John Simmons of Acheta fondly recalls a recent job in Germany



A rat with a very long tail. Is this *Rattus rattus*? Chris Swindells would like to know what you think?

where they were running all around on roof supports above his head. The cereal processing site concerned was no different from its many UK counterparts, except that it relied heavily on its raw materials being moved by the bulk carriage barges that are still so common on the great European rivers like the Rhine and Elbe. He has no doubt that this was a significant contributing factor, but surely it can't be the only one?

Pest magazine would value feedback from readers as to their encounters, if they have had any, with black rats. Everyone assumes that they are still active in port areas, but is there any truth in the rumours that they may be present in the London Underground too?

Do contact the editor at editor@pestmagazine.co.uk if you think you have ever had a black rat encounter.

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Invasive ants – your help needed

Pest controllers, we need your help! Have you come across any colonies of dark brown ants, that look similar to the common garden ant, but behave rather differently?

A giveaway is if you find an active colony indoors in the middle of the winter. If you have – these might be a new colony of *Lasius neglectus* and Clive Boase from the Pest Management Consultancy would like to hear from you.

Lasius neglectus is an invasive ant from western Asia and, to date, there is only one known colony in the UK, at Hidcote in Gloucestershire (as reported in **Pest** issue 21 May & June 2012).



Have you seen any *Lasius neglectus*, pictured above? Although smaller, *Lasius neglectus* is not easy to distinguish from our native and very common black ant, *Lasius niger* pictured on the right

This ant can form super-colonies covering several hectares, in buildings, gardens and parks. It can be a serious nuisance within buildings, both on foodstuffs and by damaging electrical devices such as security systems. Outdoors, the ants displace native wildlife.

L. neglectus is slightly smaller and browner than our native black ant, but its behaviour is markedly different. It can occur in large numbers outdoors in parks and gardens, but may also be abundant indoors, even in winter.



This monitor trap clearly demonstrates the huge numbers of *L. neglectus* that can be encountered

So, if you have come across unusually large numbers of small, dark brown ants in and around buildings, even in the winter, or in garden centres or glasshouses, then we are really keen to hear from you.

We won't need details of your customer, just the approximate location, and specimens to confirm the identity. So, if you think you may know of a possible colony of *L. neglectus*, please contact:

Clive Boase, the Pest Management Consultancy,
Email: clive@pest-management.com or Tel: 01440 706127



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Michael Fowler from Manchester City Council

Paul Charlson from West Lancashire District Council

Public health: Today & in the future

A recent seminar at Salford University examined the benefits of effective pest management in helping to address the health inequalities identified as being so closely associated with social inequalities in the Marmot review. Organised by CIEH's National Pest Advisory Panel (NPAP) the current financial constraints imposed on local authorities also had to be taken into account. Dave Olbury, NPAP secretary, reports.

In today's society, there is a social gradient in health – the lower a person's social position, the worse his or her health. Health inequalities result from social inequalities. These are two of the key findings from the independent review led by Professor Sir Michael Marmot in his report *Fair Society, Healthy Lives*, (aka the Marmot review), published in February 2010.

Pests linked to poor health

Unhealthy living conditions and pests are very much linked to the determinants of this poor health and social inequality. Public Health England (PHE) and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) are now working closely with local authorities and those communities suffering the highest level of deprivation, poor health and overall inequality to address these issues.

Opening the Salford event, Paul Charlson, commercial, safety & licensing manager for West Lancashire District Council (and also a member of NPAP) referred to the document published by

NPAP entitled *The Perfect Storm*. This report references the Marmot review and highlights a widening gap – a social gradient – in health inequality, as poorer families are getting poorer. For many, living conditions are deteriorating and when living in pest infested environments this can result in poor health with loss of both physical and mental well-being.

"Local authorities experiencing severe financial pressure are now electing to charge for their pest control services," stated Paul.

Poor forced to treat pests themselves

"Vulnerable residents unable to afford treatment charges are therefore being forced to treat infestations themselves, using amateur products with varying degrees of success. The consequential risks to the environment this may pose from amateur untrained users of pesticides is of concern."

The session concluded by reinforcing the need to maintain a well trained public health force to





Helga Pile from UNISON

protect the public from the threats associated from urban pests, in food establishments, housing and public areas. This underscores the need for a more harmonised strategic approach to the management and control of urban pests.

UNISON's national officer, Helga Pile, presented findings from *The Damage Report* originally published in January 2013.

Under the Freedom of Information Act local authorities were surveyed to establish the effects the recession and austerity cuts were having on local authority environmental health services and its affect on public health. A response rate of 70% was achieved. The results showed that the majority of local authorities were now operating with fewer staff, with less emphasis on preventative work. Longer response times to service requests were also being experienced with more emphasis being placed on income generation.

The survey also found that since 2009/10, 10% of local authorities had no pest control service at all and that free pest control treatments had fallen from 7% to just 3%. Treatment charges were increasing, concessions were either reduced or rationed and generally more DIY treatments were being carried out.

Pro-active pest treatments falling

Worryingly, the survey found that local authorities were moving away from carrying out pro-active preventative pest treatments with most treatments being risk assessed before being undertaken. Additionally, outsourcing of the service, considered by a number of authorities as an option, would, the survey suggested, result in the loss of intelligence and long-term strategy.

"Communities were being encouraged to support council services before it was too late, get councillors to think again before making cuts and to debate local consequences of implementing government policy," concluded Helga.

Speaking from the perspective of managing a significant local authority pest control team, Michael Fowler from Manchester City Council detailed his team's experiences. He outlined a general shift in focus from a previously essentially free, pro-active pest control treatment policy to that of a chargeable reactive treatment policy. The emphasis being on maintaining as a minimum, a cost-neutral budget as a core objective.



Dr Alex Stewart of Public Health England

The range of services offered by Manchester City Council and its treatment charges were reviewed over the period 2009/10 to the current financial year, 2013/14. During this period the service had seen a steady increase in treatment charges with a corresponding reduction in service demand leading, as an inevitable consequence, to reductions in staffing levels. Ways of maximising income generation and cost saving initiatives were also outlined and discussed in detail with delegates.

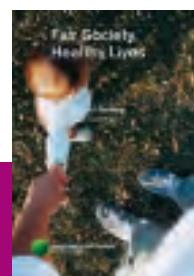
Sitting on a time bomb?

Concluding the strategy element of the seminar, Dr Alex Stewart of Public Health England outlined the urban pests considered to be of public health importance and reviewed the pathogens and diseases associated with each of these pests. Disease surveillance and typical risk models used by PHE for predicting the impact diseases may have on the community were explained in detail.

The important role Port Health plays in the overall strategy to help guard against importation of diseases, such as plague from rodents and malaria from mosquitoes, was outlined. Ensuring de-ratting and disinfestation measures are carried out effectively on ships and aircraft, together with the human health surveillance of persons entering the UK were key to the success of the strategy.

The need to work harmoniously with local authorities, the NHS and other agencies in developing strategies to protect the public health of communities was identified as a major objective of PHE.

Dr Stewart concluded by saying that ignoring the significant contribution local authority public health pest control plays in protecting the public health and well being of communities would be the equivalent to sitting on a time bomb!



Copies of the full report, or executive summary of *Fair Society, Healthy Lives* can be downloaded

from www.instituteofhealthequity.org/projects/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review The *Perfect Storm* report is available on the NPAP website at www.cieh.org/policy/npap_publications

Take the Pest Test

BASIS has made two PROMPT CPD points available if you can demonstrate that you have improved your knowledge, understanding and technical know-how by passing the **Pest Test** and answering all our questions correctly. So read our articles on bed bug dispersion (pp 11-13), the Freedom of Information Act (pp 15), hantaviruses (pp 19), NPAP seminar (pp 30 & 31) and badgers (pp 32) in this issue of **Pest** and answer the questions below. Try to answer them all in one sitting and without referring back to the article.

SEND COMPLETED QUESTIONS to: **Pest** Magazine, Foxhill, Stanford on Soar, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE12 5PZ.

After your completed **Pest Test** arrives we will mark the questions and, if all answers are correct, we will enter the results directly onto your own PROMPT record held by BASIS.

1	Why is it inadvisable to conduct bed bug dispersal trials in Petri dishes?
<input type="checkbox"/>	a) it's too cold for them
<input type="checkbox"/>	b) they get embarrassed if people can see them
<input type="checkbox"/>	c) the dishes are too small so they can't move around
<input type="checkbox"/>	d) the dishes are too expensive
2	How much does the Local Government Association estimate local authorities spend on answering FOIA requests per year?
<input type="checkbox"/>	a) £10.7m
<input type="checkbox"/>	b) £13.7m
<input type="checkbox"/>	c) £23.7m
<input type="checkbox"/>	d) £31.7m
3	If you say rodents are asymptomatic (when talking about viruses) what does it mean?
<input type="checkbox"/>	a) they are waiting for symptoms to appear
<input type="checkbox"/>	b) they carry the disease but expresses no symptoms
<input type="checkbox"/>	c) they can't decide which symptoms to develop
<input type="checkbox"/>	d) they develop symptoms several months later
4	What does PHE stand for?
<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Private Health England
<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Public Heart Entities
<input type="checkbox"/>	c) Public Health England
<input type="checkbox"/>	d) Private Health Expenditure
5	When was the Marmot report published?
<input type="checkbox"/>	a) 2005
<input type="checkbox"/>	b) 2008
<input type="checkbox"/>	c) 2010
<input type="checkbox"/>	d) 2012
6	How many badgers were killed in total in the Gloucestershire test area?
<input type="checkbox"/>	a) 721
<input type="checkbox"/>	b) 921
<input type="checkbox"/>	c) 1,121
<input type="checkbox"/>	d) 1,221

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So when is a pest a pest?

The badger cull is officially over

Always destined to be a high profile and controversial activity, the two pilot badger culls in Somerset and Gloucestershire have, for this year anyway, concluded.

Readers will recall that these pilot culls were originally planned to go ahead in summer/autumn 2012 but were abandoned at the last minute after survey results indicated the badger populations were far higher than originally thought.

In 2013 the two pilots did get underway (Somerset on 27 August, followed by Gloucestershire on 3 September) with a target of despatching 70% of badgers in both areas.

The pilots were designed to test the assumption that controlled shooting is a safe, humane and effective means of reducing badger numbers. The original licence granted by Natural England covers a six week culling period which can be repeated annually for four years.

Initially both culls got off to what farmers' representatives and the Government saw as promising starts. But it was not long before the culling targets proved harder than expected to achieve.

Prior to the cull, it was estimated the badger population was 2,400 in Somerset and 3,400 in Gloucestershire. In October Defra revised these estimates downwards to 1,450 and 2,350, respectively.

In Somerset, after the initial six weeks, 850 badgers had been killed, and the licence was extended for a further three weeks, after which the culled total rose to 940 – an overall reduction of 65%.

During the initial six week period in Gloucestershire only 30% of the target figure was killed, leading to an eight week extension and a lowering of the culling target to 58%. However, a decreasing number of badgers had been seen by the contractors meaning that achieving even the revised target was unlikely. As a result culling ended on 30 November – some three weeks earlier than planned – with an overall total of just 921 killed; just under 40% of the target.

Quite what has been achieved is hard to gauge and where the scheme goes from here, who knows? What is certain is there has been a great deal of unpleasantness and threatening behaviour at local level. One estimate of the bill for policing activities stretches to around £2 million (which equates to over £1,000 per badger killed). On the other hand, Defra indicates that more than 28,000 cattle were slaughtered in England in 2012 due to bovine TB.

Professional pest controllers may have thought initially that opportunities for their skills existed in this culling operation. Fortunately, after this initial enthusiasm, sense prevailed and few, if any, have been involved.

Booming wild boar population

Also facing a cull is the population of wild boar in the Forest of Dean. With no natural predators the only way to keep the population in-check is culling, says the Forestry Commission.

Whilst many like to see wild boar, they can be highly destructive, especially to grassy areas (lawns and pitches) and, occasionally, to crops like maize. In 2011 the Forestry Commission culled 150 boar in the Forest of Dean, another 100 were culled in 2012, and this year the aim is to shoot 135 animals by the end of February.



As with all these mammals, there are people both for and against a cull. One of the main problems in the Forest of Dean is that no-one actually knows how many boar there are.

A survey carried out in early 2013 estimated the population to be a minimum of 535. But, since, the Forest of Dean isn't fenced or enclosed in any way, the animals can move in and out.

Red squirrels on the up

A study by the University of Liverpool says that the red squirrel population along the Sefton coastline seems to be recovering after a serious outbreak of squirrel pox in 2008, which led to an 85% fall in numbers.



Squirrel pox is often carried by grey squirrels and is thought to be a significant factor in the decline of the red squirrel population.

Dr Julian Chantrey, from the Institute of Integrative Biology, said: "There are indications that a few of the surviving squirrels have antibody to the virus, which would suggest that they have recovered from infection in the past."

Also positive, in September, Red Squirrels Northern England reported a 7% increase in populations across the north of England – the first increase recorded in 140 years. In a separate study, also published in September, sightings of grey squirrels had fallen by 45% in monitored areas in central and north-eastern Scotland.

In contrast to the highly secretive badger cull, the Red Squirrels Northern Group quite happily promotes its grey squirrel culling programme.

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Urban fox management

This 12-page publication produced by a coalition of public health bodies and conservation organisations provides the most up-to-date advice and guidance on practical methods to control the urban fox population.

With so many differing views and opinions on the management of urban fox populations, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and its National Pest Advisory Panel (NPAP) called on specialist knowledge and expertise to help produce this science-based document. The guidance incorporates the views of public health practitioners, pest controllers and conservationists – including Public Health England and Natural England.

As to be expected the problem with urban foxes is explained, as are the issues of foxes as sources of human disease. An excellent section goes through the various means of management – from the practicalities of preventing attractive sites to the use of pesticide products, proofing, trapping, shooting and snaring.

Copies can be downloaded from www.cieh.org



A 'must have' if involved with bed bugs

This new, handy little booklet is likely to establish itself as the reference book for all those involved with practical bed bug work. Running to 46-pages, all in full colour, it is packed with fantastic photographs featuring bed bugs at all life stages and in all those situations you are most likely to come across them.

As the author, Stephen Doggett (well known as the architect of the Australian Bed Bug Code) explains in the introduction: "This guide will help you to identify bed bugs, to recognise their signs, and teach you where the insect can be found. "It is ideal for pest controllers, accommodation providers, health officials, travellers – in fact anyone who may have to eradicate bed bugs, or wish to avoid them in the first place."

As the booklet does not contain any details about control procedures, it can be used in any country without any problems.

ISBN 978-0-646-90660-7 Copies are available in Europe from Bed Bugs Ltd at www.bed-bugs.co.uk.

Price £10 + £1.50 p&p for individual copies. Bulk rates available.



Trapping and snaring



Written by Steve Caple, a familiar face at PestTech, this book contains exactly what it says on the cover! It is a highly informative and up-to-date guide on how to tackle mammal pests – be they rabbits, squirrels, moles, rats, foxes or mink.

With over 40 years of practical experience, Steve shares his knowledge, it may be simple to set a trap or a snare, but it's knowing where to set it that is just as important.

Ultimately this can be the difference between success and total failure.

For each pest species, the reader will not only learn to identify the tell-tale signs of their presence but, more importantly, the best method of catching it.

This 240-page hard-backed book is illustrated with excellent photographs and is bang up-to-date with the traps featured. There is something for everyone in it - from the old hand to the complete novice. Throughout its pages the emphasis is on carrying out pest control duties safely, lawfully, and above all, as humanely as possible.

ISBN 978-1783061-679. Available from Countryman Pest Control www.countrymanpestcontrol.co.uk Price £19.95



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And the winner is...

It was smiles all-round when the top three products in the Pest Best Product Award 2013 were announced during PestTech. In first place was the XL8, manufactured by County Down-based Lance Lab.

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Taking second place was the popular BASF Formidor ant product and in third position Detex non-tox soft bait from Bell Laboratories.

"Readers are in the driving seat in these awards and it is readers votes, and readers votes alone, which determine the winning products," explains **Pest** editor Frances McKim. "This year's winners are all exceptionally innovative in their own way and have clearly struck a chord with pest professionals."

The XL8 telescopic lance is light, easy-to-use and allows precision insecticide dust application at heights up to nine metres.

"We were delighted to win the award," said a very pleasantly surprised Philip Bowman, managing director of Lance Lab. "This award is totally unexpected and a great honour for our new company. Thanks again to all who voted for us."



The proud winners. Left to right: Brady Hudson from Bell Laboratories, Philip Bowman director, Lance Lab and James Whittaker from BASF Pest Solutions

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New 'set of clothes' for BASF rodenticides

The BASF range of professional rodenticides has had a complete make-over and now visibly stands-out from the crowd, thanks to striking new colour-coded packaging.

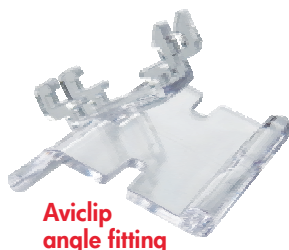
Being rolled-out across Europe this season, the new product packs clearly brand the Neosorexa, Sorexa and Neokil ranges for their difenacoum active with distinctive red lids and bannered labels. Smart, new rectangular tubs provide display surfaces substantial enough to identify each specific formulation at a glance, whilst full colour labels highlight key formulation features and benefits.

Matching packaging, with orange lids and blue-bannered labels, similarly identifies the company's growing European range of flocoumafen-containing formulations marketed as Storm.



www.pestcontrol.basf.co.uk

Aviclip side fitting



Aviclip angle fitting

Protect those rays of sunshine!

Solar panels are now quite the thing. Yet birds can find them equally attractive. New from Network is a range of Aviclips which are quick and easy to install. Ideal for traditionally hard to proof areas such as solar panels and roof ridge tiles, the discreet, transparent clips are designed to secure Avipoint bird spikes or Avishock electric track in place.

Used on solar panels, the clips can easily be fixed on to the side of the panel without obscuring any photo cells. This enables Avipoint or Avishock to be fixed on top of the panel, so proofing the panels against birds without reducing solar efficiency.

Due to the angle of the base of the clip they are also ideal for use on ridge tiles, making the apex of roofs easier to proof than ever before. The clips can be fixed to solar panels or ridge tiles using either an adhesive, such as Avifix or Avisil, or screwed into place.

www.networkbird.net

Metal detectable products

Killgerm has refined two of its popular products in the AF range, to be specifically designed for use in the food industry. Both of these products are now available in a metal detectable material produced in food industry blue, so as to prevent food product contamination from foreign objects.

The first is the AF Insect Monitor whose slim-line profile means it can be placed in narrow gaps, close to insect activity. It contains an easily inspected insect attractant pad. Alongside this is the AF Snappa mouse bait station designed to trap mice using a Snap-E mouse trap so that the body of mouse is not visible once trapped. Both products can be fitted together for use in combination.

The AF Insect Monitor



The AF Snappa mouse bait station



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8-9 May

ConExPest 2014

International Trade Fair & Conference Centre,
Krakow, Poland
www.conexpest.pl

2-4 June

11th Fumigation & Pheromones Conference

Krakow, Poland
www.insectslimited.com

20-23 July

8th International Conference on Urban Pests

Zurich, Switzerland
www.icup2014.ch

21-24 October

PestWorld 2014

Orlando, Florida, USA
www.npmapestworld.org

5 November

PestTech 2014

National Motorcycle Museum, Coventry
www.pesttech.org.uk

Get set for Eurocido 2014

The German flagship event runs every two years, which means that the 11th International Trade Fair this coming February will mark 22 years since the first Eurocido. The fair will again be held in the Westfalenhallen in Dortmund.

Unlike other European events, entry is not free. Tickets cost Euro 39, if purchased in advance, Euro 49 on the door. The fee covers both days. Tickets can be purchased online at www.eurocido.eu

As the saying goes 'you do get what you pay for'. The conference programme, which this year has a strong, although not exclusive, emphasis on invasive species, is full of independent speakers.

Simultaneous translation into English is also provided – not a cheap exercise. *Lasius neglectus* and the Asian tiger mosquito are both on the agenda along with camel spiders and pseudo-scorpions.

Regulation is Europe-wide these days, so unsurprisingly the new CEN quality

standard for pest control services, risk mitigation measures and the like also feature.

From the exhibitors' perspective, the fact that pest controllers have to pay does mean that all those who attend are there with a purpose and ready to do business, so it's a case of quality rather than quantity.

Historically, the German market has often been the first place that new products are launched, so it is always worth a trawl round the exhibitors to see what's new and what might be coming to the UK in future.



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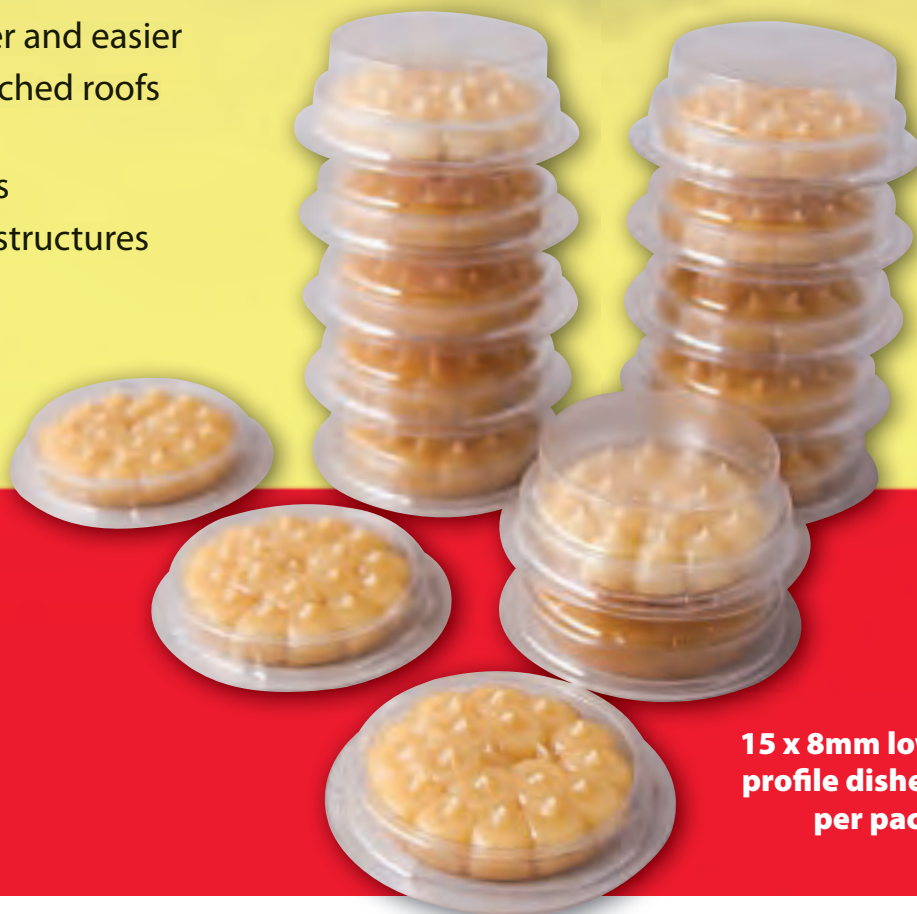
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