

Start Preparing Your Home Against Carpenter Bees for the Spring

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Carpenter Bees

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(Newswire.net -- March 22, 2016) -- While carpenter bees are not considered wood destroyers on the same level of carpenter ants or termites, they can become an annoyance if they target your home. They have been called carpenter bees because you find small piles of sawdust under their work areas, similar to what you might find with a human carpenter when they saw on a board—dust will be made. These are just flying bugs that have a close resemblance to bees, but they do not make honey. A male carpenter bee

cannot sting, but they have been known to approach humans. On the other hand, the female bees will bite when they have been handled improperly.

Male and Female: The Differences

Both the males and the females have the appearance of a bumblebee, which can make it difficult to distinguish the difference between the two. Looking at a bumblebee, they will have a hairy abdomen with yellow markings, but the most obvious difference lies in their behavior. A female will cut holes that are 3/8th inches in diameter into stained or raw wood. If it looks like a .45 caliber bullet hole, do not be alarmed. If carpenter bees were in the area, most likely they were the culprit. These insects love cedar wood, and they will target the siding of natural softwood.

After carpenter bees have bored 1/4 of an inch or 1/2 of an inch into the wood, they will chew a chamber along the grain that is four to six inches, called a brood chamber. In the chamber, they will deposit larvae and seal them in at the end of the chamber with chewed up sawdust or bee spit. It takes between one to three months before the larvae will mature, and after that, they leave the chamber as adult carpenter bees.

Re-Using Old Chambers

The mother bees have sometimes re-used old chambers over making new ones, and while they cause less damage to the structural integrity of wood than termites or carpenter ants, they can trim boards into something that looks like it had been used for target practice. Carpenter bees will buzz around the board, and they will dive at you in an aggressive fashion. In some cases, they will chase you. The males, however, cannot sting, so they are hoping that they are chasing off the predators of larvae without them being aware of that. With most people it will work. They avoid all types of flying bees.

The Carpenter Bees Natural Enemy: The Problems Compounded

Woodpeckers love the larvae of the carpenter bee and treat it as a delicacy. When woodpeckers enter the combination with carpenter bees, it can cause some nasty damage to your home when they punch holes in the wood searching for a meal. In addition, they will make a racket while doing it.

How to Control Carpenter Bees

One of the most common methods used to mitigate a carpenter bee problem relates to sealing the holes or painting the wood. Other people have suggested that you dust the holes with Sevin, which is a pesticide, and it will attack the nervous system of the carpenter bee. Eventually, it leads to paralysis and death. Using caulk on the holes will not work. The carpenter bees will return through another route. One of the most recommended methods of handling carpenter bees is to use what is called plastic wood. This becomes harder than wood, and will block them out. You could also use water putty or wood putty to keep them away.

The Key to Painting

Plans of painting to reduce a carpenter bee problem should be more than a wood stain and has to offer a true surface film. The problem is that both homeowners and bees alike prefer cedar wood. Homeowners like it because it looks great whereas carpenter bees like it because it tastes delicious. Some people have sometimes used steel wool or nailed window screening over the holes to discourage the bees from attacking the wood. While wrapping your wood trim with aluminum or vinyl can work, it is a little drastic. Should you decide to replace the damaged wood, first make sure that the new wood will be rot and bee protected.

There have been recommendations that customers coat their surfaces with kerosene, but that is an obvious fire hazard best avoided. You simply dance from having a less serious bee problem to having a potential fire problem. The best method of handling a burden like carpenter bees is to hire a pest control company. They will spray a treatment for those who do not want to spend an afternoon chasing carpenter bees. Carpenter bees are known for being good pollinators, and beyond creating holes in wood, they do not hurt anyone, so the best advice is to paint, plug or caulk the wood and hope they go somewhere else. If not, pest control is another option that will handle the problem effectively.

About UltraPro Pest Protection:

With over 30 years of experience in eliminating bed bugs, termites, and rodents, UltraPro Pest Protection is emerging as New York and New Jersey's leading pest control service for homeowners and commercial businesses.

For more information, visit ultrapropestcontrol.com or the UltraPro Pest Protection page.

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