

FACT SHEET

Silverfish

Lepisma Saccharina

Firebrats

Thermobia Domestica



08444 828 321 Local Rate 7p per minute

03444 828 321 Basic Rate Mobile Friendly

not 24 hour

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www.dialapest.co.uk

Silverfish and firebrats are slender, wingless insects, up to 20mm long with three, long bristletails at the end of their body. Silverfish are shiny and silver or pearl grey. Firebrats are mottled grey or tan. Both are extremely fast runners and are often seen only when trapped in wash basins or bath tubs, where they are unable to climb the smooth vertical surface to escape. They hide during the day and feed at night.

The easiest way to tell one insect from another is by the length of the antennae - The silverfish antenna is less than the whole body length, the firebrat antenna is thin and longer than the whole body.



Silverfish and firebrats are generally harmless, but can cause damage by feeding on paper, books, wallpaper, or by infesting packets of dried food, particularly in damp locations. They will eat any of the foods humans eat and also starch, glue, paste and dead animals, even to the extent of cannibalising dead or injured members of their own species.

These insects and their eggs are often brought into the home in cardboard cartons, books, papers, fabrics and other carbohydrate materials.

Both insects can be found anywhere in the house - in attics, between walls, under floors, under sinks, in cupboards and along pipes. Firebrats will not breed unless the temperature is above 25° C so they are only found in hot locations such as bakeries, cooking ranges, boiler houses, etc.

Adult insects have quite a long lifespan – 1 to 3 years. Eggs are laid in cracks and crevices in damp and warm locations and hatch in 2 – 8 weeks.

Prevention and Cure



Clean up areas where wood, cardboard boxes, old papers or books are stored. Look for any moist decomposing vegetable matter in or near to the house (compost heaps, grass cuttings, mossy roofs, or pot plants, damp areas under floor tiles, damp wood under sinks and baths). Clearing away any decaying matter and remedying any dampness faults will usually prevent re-infestation. Don't forget if you burn logs to check incoming firewood for open fires, as this can be a source of ingress for many insect pests