

Asian lady beetles invade homes

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U.S. scientists say this is the time of year Asian lady beetles begin invading homes but there are methods that can help protect homes from infestation.

"It's been a problem for the last three or four years," said Tim Gibb, a Purdue University extension entomologist. "They were first intentionally brought into the U.S. to control aphid pests in fruit trees near the East Coast."

According to research, the beetles were effective and aphid populations have been suppressed. Homeowners, however, receive no benefit when their homes are invaded during the fall and winter months.

The Purdue expert suggests several methods to control the pests: When the number of insects is small, one method is to physically remove the beetles from the home by regularly sweeping or vacuuming affected areas.

For higher populations of insects, chemicals could be used to control them.

However, Gibbs said the most effective control measure is to prevent the beetles from entering the home altogether. That can be accomplished by caulking cracks, fixing broken window screens and door jambs and plugging openings in the home's foundation and roof.

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