

# Was that a bed bug on my couch? This app has the answer

December 31 2018, by John Seewer

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Just the thought of a bed bug infestation is enough to make you start scratching and tossing out furniture.

A new app created by a researcher at Ohio State University has the answers and information on what to do next.

The app funded by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is set up as one-stop information source for everything bed bugs. There are guides for identifying and getting rid of them along with tips for travelers.

Susan Jones, an [entomologist](#) at Ohio State, said the app was needed because there's a lot of misinformation out there about the critters.

"If you don't know anything about an organism, then you are sort of at the mercy of that creature," said Jones, who has been studying bed bugs for about 10 years.

The app works on Android and iOS devices and can be found by searching "bed bug field guide."

Bed bugs can cause instant panic, but few people really know how to spot them or what to do, she said.

There are right ways and wrong ways to get rid of them, she said, noting that most store-bought chemicals advertised as ways to eradicate bed

bugs don't work. It's a job that should be handled by professionals, Jones said.

Too often, people who can't afford to pay someone, try to do it themselves, she said.

A year ago, a woman accidentally started a fire while trying to kill bed bugs with rubbing alcohol at a multi-family home in Cincinnati that left people homeless.

That's just one—extreme—example of what can go wrong.

Michael Potter, an entomologist at the University of Kentucky, said bed bugs have been making a major resurgence and that while most people think of them when traveling, they are most often found in houses and apartments.

The cost of eliminating bed bugs, Jones said, is a reason they continue to be a problem. They can reproduce quickly, can hide from floor to ceiling, and they're nocturnal, she said.

"You don't know where they're hiding," Jones said.

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