

March- April

Masonry Bees



Bolton Council

These are solitary bees. Like all bees they are important pollinators of plants, but unlike honey bees and bumble bees they have no workers and have no collective nest. Mortar bees excavate chambers in soft mortar joints in brick walls (approximately 20mm deep) and Mining bees will excavate chambers in soft/sandy soil. Although they are solitary they do excavate their chambers close together and thus give the impression of being a colony and occupying the same habitat.

These solitary bees:

- are harmless (do not sting)
- are beneficial
- they do not pester people, and
- they do not damage buildings

They look much like honey bees but are generally a little hairier. Mortar/masonry bees are invariably seen on sunny days and are active in sun facing elevations of buildings. Their activity appears a little confused as they hover over their territory looking for their egg laying chambers. They sometimes block airbricks and keyholes with mud used to construct egg chambers.

Mining bees are found on sun drenched areas of ground. Holes in soil created by mining bees are approximately the diameter of a pencil and are distinguished by a heap of soil around the rim.

The bees pay no attention to people. Most calls received by Pest Control in late March to April for bee/wasp problems are in fact solitary bees. Solitary bees are however beneficial insects and non aggressive and the Council does not, therefore offer an eradication service.



March & October

Cluster Fly



Bolton Council

Female cluster flies lay eggs singly in soil cracks and crevices in the vicinity of the earthworm. Eggs hatch in three days and the larvae (parasitic stage) penetrate and develop in the earthworms.

Populations vary from year to year, sometimes worse after wet summers.

Cluster flies are very common, occurring throughout the UK. **The adult flies, after hibernation during the winter months, lay their eggs in the earth or in animal dung.** Permanent areas of grassland are favourite sites e.g. permanent grazed pasture or parkland as solid cultivation such as ploughing disrupts the flies breeding cycle. The eggs remain in the earth and hatch when soil temperature increases in the spring. The larval stage is parasitic, entering earthworms and feeding upon them until emerging as an adult fly.

Cluster flies migrate from outdoors into the lofts of houses and into farm buildings during the winter months. Obvious sign of an infestation is a roof space containing a large quantity of lethargic flies and a quantity of dead flies. Unless the loft is used for storage purposes or is accessed regularly the flies will hibernate successfully leaving the premises in early spring dependant on the weather.

Control

- **Professional Help;** Your Local Authority can provide this service (however, there may be a charge involved). Alternatively, commercial pest control companies are listed in Yellow Pages and Thompson's Local Directory.

When using pesticides always follow the instructions on the label



May-June

May Bug



Bolton Council

Melolontha melolontha the **may bug** or **cockchafer** is not a true bug but a relatively large beetle found more commonly in the south of the UK.

Melolontha melolontha normally appears flying on warm evenings from May to July.

Melolontha melolontha is attracted to artificial light and often comes indoors through open windows or even down chimneys. May bugs may cause consternation to those who encounter them but are harmless to humans.

Most calls received by Pest Control occur in May and June as the name of the insect suggests, and usually take the form of clients saying they have “flying cockroaches”. Cockroaches however do not fly in the UK.

The Council does not offer an eradication service for this insect, no treatment is necessary.



Throughout Summer



Bolton Council

Flying Ants

Flying ants are common and occur on a small number of days through the summer when weather and atmospheric conditions are ideal for the insect. The ants take to the air to mate and drop down to the earth where the females will remove their wings and re-locate to begin construction on a new colony.

Pest Control will receive multiple calls from the public on these particular days as flying insects can congregate in huge numbers, however the phenomena is quite short lived and will generally be over within 24 hours.

Pest Control can treat but will usually attend to the service call **after** the ants have already left the property.

The Pest Control office usually give the advice to either vacuum up the insects and tip outside or to treat the insects with an ordinary household aerosol insect killer.



December

Wasp Nests



Bolton Council

Pest Control office will receive several calls during early December reporting wasp nests, usually found in loft areas. This is due to the public only going to the loft infrequently through the year and not noticing a nest having developed, the customer has usually gone in the loft to get their Christmas tree out where it has been stored since last Christmas.

The wasp nest will be dead as all wasps die at the end of the summer, the pest control service normally does not treat any nests much after end of October, and no treatment is therefore necessary.

