

Carpet Critters

We use the term carpet critters to include those moths and beetles which damage your carpets and other woollen goods. So how do you tell if you've got them? Well, aside from seeing the obvious damage to your carpets, in the case of the moths, you'll see the males flying around your house. They're small, around a centimetre long, tube-shaped when not flying and mostly either cream or brown. You'll notice them in numbers rather than the odd one. The variegated carpet beetles are just 2-3mm long with an orange, black and white speckled appearance. They can often be found dead on windowsills having failed in their attempt to escape the building whilst the fur beetles are 5mm long and shiny black with clear white marks on their backs.



The Damage

In all cases, it's actually the larvae which eat through your carpets rather than the adults. The adult females lay their eggs in a suitable feeding environment for their young. The larvae of all of our carpet critters then live within that environment munching their way through wool, fur, leather and feathers. The young of the variegated carpet beetle is more commonly known as the "woolly bear".

Prevention and Treatment

All species appear to have had a bit of a resurgence in the last couple of years and the number of infestations which I come across is definitely on the increase. They are still not so common though and so to get any of our critters is really bad luck. There are a few things which you can do to keep lady luck on your side though; be aware of any birds which are nesting in or on your home. As soon as the young birds have fledged (but not before) ensure that the nesting material is removed as this can harbour both the moth and the beetle. Good and regular vacuuming of your carpets can help reduce the numbers of larvae and paying particular attention to the carpet edges with your vacuum cleaner's nozzle can be particularly effective. If you have clothing which has been stashed away for months or maybe years, inspect it regularly for damage and dispose of it or get treatment if damage is evident. And, of course, keep an eye out for tiny moths flying around your house, beetles on your windowsills and holes in your carpets.



The only solution to an infestation which we would recommend is to call in a professional pest controller. He or she will treat your property with two or more applications of a residual insecticide which will put paid to the little critters.