

It's ANT Season

By Macy Quintanilla

Here they are again. On the counter. Across the floor. Just when you think you've swept up the last of them, they're back. Frequently it's those little black ants that seem to come out of nowhere and invade the home.

The Columbia Gorge's variety of climates and landscapes make it an attractive place to live. Wooded areas, grasslands and water are also attractive wild-life habitats. You might expect to have a family of mice move into the woodshed or bees to construct a nests under the eaves. But when does the occasional 'visitor' turn into infestation? And who is responsible for getting rid of them?

"Infest" is defined as "to inhabit or overrun in numbers or quantities large enough to be harmful, threatening, or obnoxious."

Both Oregon and Washington Landlord Tenant Laws require a property owner to render the house free of infestation at the time the rental agreement begins and, except in the case of a single family residence, control infestation during tenancy. Some rental agreements require the tenant to report an infestation immediately after move in and for the landlord to remedy the problem. Landlords also must keep the home in good repair, and in some cases, keep vegetation under control to prevent infestation, but not if the tenant caused infestation, by things like storing trashcans or firewood too near the house.

Keeping animals can attract unwanted visitors as well. Skunks are known to raid chicken houses looking for eggs. If they find a nice warm home in the process, you may find a surfeit of skunks living in your crawl space. As the saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Here are some simple ideas to help keep unwanted critters at bay.

- Keep soil away from wood and siding.
- Use pressure-treated wood.
- Cut back tree branches from the house and reduce plant coverage around the foundation.
- Eliminate standing water. Some pests are attracted to moisture.
- Add crushed rock around flower and shrubbery beds instead of mulch to eliminate food and habitats for insects.
- Keep gutters and rooflines in good repair and free of debris to reduce breeding areas.
- Seal openings at plumbing, electrical, and telephone line entrances into the home.
- Keep trashcans covered tightly and stored away from the house.
- Store firewood off the ground and away from the house.
- Repair damaged window screens.
- Use chimney caps or wire mesh to cover the chimneys—because they are the single largest opening in a typical home.
- Install wire mesh over attic, roof, and crawl space vents to prevent entry.

If all else fails, call the local exterminator. Many now use products that are gentle on the environment and safe for people, pets and plants.

Ant illustrations: Gina Mikel



We're Cleaning Up
the Gorge!

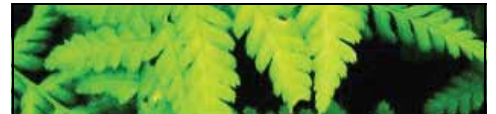
Schedule Spring and Summer Outside Maintenance!

- Lawn Care
- Bush & Bed Care
- Spring Clean-up
- Debris Removal
- Window Washing

Gorge RENTALS
Property Management

(541) 387-4080 • (800) 387-4787

Rent@GorgeRentals.com
610 Oak Street Hood River



Gorge Environmental Pest Control

We provide a low impact high result option for pest management.

We provide service on residential and commercial buildings for general pests, wood destroying pests, and rodents.

We are a husband and wife team providing the best in customer service and satisfaction.

Dan and Shannon Armstrong
541.386.6142

www.gorge-pest-control.com

1001795 OR / 74224 WA

