

Pantry Moths

If you have ever had the unfortunate experience of opening a bag of flour and seeing maggot-looking bugs squirming around, you will likely know what pantry moths are. Pantry moths are also known as Indian Mealmoths, weevil moths or flour moths. These annoying insects and their larvae are actually pretty common especially during the warmer months and can be found in dry goods such as flour, pasta, nuts, spices, dried fruits, cereals and rice.

Signs of infestation

- Pantry moth eggs are invisible to the naked eye. The eggs can already be in products that you purchase from food stores and bring into your home.
- The larvae are a off-white colour with brown heads. Mature larvae measure 12-14mm long and can be found in and around dry food items and on shelves.
- White webbing may be visible on the surface of foods, on shelves or inside food packaging.
- "Tracks" can be seen in foods in containers where the larvae have been feeding.
- Adult moths are usually seen at night, especially in the kitchen area. They are 8-10mm long with light grey wings with reddish brown markings on the outer two-thirds of the wings.



How can you get rid of pantry moths?

- To get rid of these pesky moths and prevent re-infestation, you will need to take everything out of your pantry and vacuum and clean all surfaces including floors, corners and cracks with warm soapy water.
- Inspect all dry goods in your pantry. Anything with evidence of the small white larvae or white webbing will need to be thrown away.
- Throw items away in sealed rubbish bags and leave outside of the house.
- Freeze the items that you are keeping. Put the items in the freezer for up to a week to kill any moth eggs.
- The mature larvae can bite through plastic and cardboard packaging so store dry goods in airtight storage containers.
- Clean up any spills in the pantry and clean shelves and check containers regularly and throw away any old food items.
- The moths do not like bay leaves so you could try leaving fresh bay leaves in your pantry which could help prevent them coming back.
- Wiping shelves with eucalyptus or peppermint oil can help to repel the moths.
- Pantry moth traps can be purchased from the supermarket or hardware store. These sticky tape traps are infused with natural moth pheromones that attract and trap the moths.

