



# Red-Legged Ham Beetle

*Necrobia rufipes*

## Description

**Adults:** Adults are 3.5-7 mm (0.25 inch) long and metallic greenish-blue in color with red legs

**Eggs:** Eggs are detectable under microscopic examination of infested items. Oval and white in color.

**Larvae:** Larvae are approximately 10 mm (0.4 inches) long with dark brownish body and reddish brown head. Move relatively quickly.

**Pupae:** Pupae are contained within a silken cocoon and are 3.5-7 mm (0.25 inches) long depending on where the cocoon is located. Built in cracks, crevices, holes, and fibrous or furry items.

## Life Cycle

Females can lay up to 2000 eggs depending on temperature, humidity, and food quality. Females deposit eggs in cracks and crevices of food items to protect them from the adult beetles. Eggs hatch in 4-8 days. Larval development occurs over 35-130 days. Larvae will sometimes migrate from food sources to pupate in hidden locations. Adults emerge from the pupa after 6-9 days. Total development time from egg to adult is 1.5- 5 months.

## Damage and Detection

Adults move quickly and will fly in warm temperatures. Adults can be caught on blunder or pitfall traps. Meat based products, similar in moisture to beef jerky, are at most risk. Other signs of infestation are white silken cocoons on infested food items, cracks/crevices, and fibrous or furry textiles such as meaty dog treats, tennis balls, and wooden furniture. They also feed on the larvae of other insect larvae, including their own.

## Corresponding Products from Insects Limited

- Flat Traps and Red-Legged Ham Beetle Attractant Lures
- Red-Legged Ham Beetle Attractant Lures Only

## QUICK SCAN

### SIZE / LENGTH

Adult 0.25 inch (3.5-7 mm)

### COLOR RANGE

Adult Metallic greenish-blue with red legs

Eggs White

### LIFE CYCLE

Females Can lay up to 2000 eggs

Egg to Adult 1.5-2 months

### FEEDING HABITS

Meat based products, similar in moisture to beef jerky are most at risk.

### INFESTATION SIGNS

White silken cocoons on infested food items, cracks/crevices, and fibrous or furry textiles such as meaty dog treats, tennis balls, and wooden furniture.

# Red Legged Ham Beetle Monitoring Guidelines

## Lure

The Synthetic Disc lure for the Red Legged Ham Beetle is a combination of pheromone and food attractant.

## Lure Storage

Keep unopened foil pouches in cool storage less than 16°C (60°F) or place in freezer for extended storage. Lures can remain frozen for up to 24 months or at room temperature for 12 months to retain their full effectiveness for use afterwards.

## Trap Designs Used with Lure

Flat traps are low profile flat rectangular sticky traps that can be placed on level surfaces.

## Trap Placement Techniques

Pheromone traps can be out placed year-round but are especially recommend when temperatures exceed 12.5°C (55°F). Floor pheromone traps like the All Beetle Trap and Flat Trap are more effective at capturing red-legged ham beetles. In areas such as a pantry or home, place one or two traps per room. In commercial areas, such as warehouses or retail stores, place pheromone traps 7.5– 5 m (25–50 feet) apart to determine the presence or absence of red-legged ham beetles. Increase pheromone trap density to 4.5–7.5 m (15–25 feet) apart to help locate source of red-legged ham beetles. Red-legged ham beetles pheromone traps are best utilized in areas that store dried meat goods such as food, animal feed, or pet food. Keep pheromone traps 7.5 m (25 feet) away from exterior doors.

## Trap and Lure Maintenance

Replace traps when glue is filled with insects or becomes dusty. Replace pheromone lures every 90 days. Replace all pheromone lures in a location at the same time. Do not stagger lure replacement over several weeks. Record date and number of catches to identify trending information.

## Fun Facts

- Commonly confused with black-legged ham beetle (*Necrobia violacea*).
- Other common names include copra beetle, bacon beetle, paper worm, ham and meat destroyer, ham beetle, and red legged copra.
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- Red-legged ham beetles initiate flight at temperatures above 20°C (68°F).