

Have you ever had one of those moments when you have done something for so long that you don't give it a second thought and then suddenly what you have been doing becomes one of those situations that could turn into a very serious problem? That happened to me just the other day. People come into my office all the time to ask how to rid themselves of insect problems, whether in the lawn, garden, or house. Some bring pictures, some pretty much play charades and expect me to guess from their body moments and descriptions. Many times people bring in a dead bug that they squashed and show me the smear spot left behind and expect me to know what the black and red stain is. Then we have those that bring the insect in for me to see alive.

The live ones have always been the easiest and quickest to identify, but the other day a gentleman brought in some live insects in a medicine bottle to ask for help. I said, "sure, let's see what you have." He then opened the bottle and dumped 7 live bed bugs onto my desk. Even at my age my hand was still fast enough to smash those fast running little bugs into black and red stains. I believe it's time to put up a sign at the office door that says, "if you have an insect that I need to look at, come inside to get me. LEAVE THE BUG AT THE DOOR."

Bed bugs are starting to become a serious problem in this country again. Years ago you would hear about them quite often and if you were a traveler you were concerned because bed bugs would "hitch hike" from your hotel room in your luggage to your house. These days hotel stays are not the number one method of spreading bed bugs. Facebook and Craigslist have become the biggest method for bed bug infestations. People are selling and trading so much with the Facebook local markets and trade sites. I was going to try and count the number of Facebook pages that people could join to sale and trade items in our area and I gave up. There are that many. Drive by the Lincoln Parish Library before and after work and count the number of people parked in the back to meet these complete strangers from Facebook to buy their clothes and furniture. You see money swapping hands but it's not as easy to see the bed bugs that you are inviting to move into your house.

There is no simple or inexpensive method to rid yourself of a bed bug infestation so your best options is to be aware of bed bugs and inspect anything that you bring into your house to make sure you don't have these blood sucking little pest hitch hiking along. Bed bugs are reddish brown, wingless and about the size of an apple seed. Immature bed bugs are smaller than the adults and translucent whitish-yellow in color.

This is my introduction article to bed bugs. I plan to write about them in much more detail for about 2 or 3 other articles. But if you feel like you have a problem and want to discuss bed bugs before my next couple of articles, come out feel free to call me at 318-251-5134 or come by my office, but leave the bugs outside.