

What do they look like?

There are two common species of mealworm beetles found in Britain and these are the “Yellow Mealworm Beetle” and the “Dark Mealworm Beetle”.

The adult beetles are between 11mm and 16mm in length and vary in colour from a shiny brown to a dull black, dependent on species.

The mealworm themselves are the larval form and are caterpillar shaped with a shiny body surface, 25mm to 30mm in length when fully grown and yellow to brownish in colour.



Where are they found?

The mealworms can be found in flour and all types of cereal products, although in most household situations, old birds' nests often prove to be the source of the problem.

Life Cycle

The adults emerge in spring and early summer and this is when they are seen around the house, generally in the windows as they are attracted by the light.

The adults lay their eggs in any suitable material. It is at this stage that the eggs may be carried into the property by birds carrying nesting material.

Some adult beetles may lay their eggs on suitable foodstuffs in the property if they can gain access.

The eggs hatch in approximately two weeks and then the resulting larvae develop over a period of approximately 18 months. It is at this time that the larvae may be seen around the property while in search of new food sources.



What should I do if I have Mealworm Beetles in my property?

If Mealworm Beetles are identified, a number of steps may be taken:-

- Locate the source of the infestation.

The sites of infestation can occur all over the property. Common places are in rooms with disused fireplaces, upstairs rooms, airing cupboards and occasionally in cereal based foodstuffs.

- If the source of the infestation is found, remove the food source and thoroughly clean the site. If possible block any access to prevent birds entering the property.

If the larvae are found in food stores, a check should be made of all packets of food and if any are found to be contaminated, they should be discarded.

An insecticidal spray suitable for crawling insects may be used to kill the adults.

If the above measures prove ineffective, treatment by a professional pest control company may be appropriate. Contact details for such firms may be found in telephone directories or similar publications.