



# Our Insect Enemies



## Everyday Pests Can Pose A Health Threat

(NAPSA)—Native insects, spiders and even rodents play a vital role in the environment. Certain pests, however, can be hazardous to one's health, from inflicting painful bites and stings that cause severe allergic reactions, to transmitting diseases that may be life-threatening.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), several pest-related diseases pose a public health concern to those living in North America. It is important that the public learn to identify and prevent contact with the most dangerous pests, including:

- **Mosquito.** A tiny mosquito can cause big damage. A few of the more than 200 species found throughout North America transmit West Nile virus and other viruses that cause encephalitis. Internationally, mosquitoes can carry and transmit the infectious agents that cause malaria, lymphatic filariasis and yellow fever.

- **Rodent.** From mice and rats to ground squirrels and prairie dogs, rodents, as well as their fleas and mites, are known to transmit diseases. The house mouse, recognizable by its grey coat and distinct ears, can contaminate food and surfaces. Deer mice, tan or brown on top with white feet and underbellies, can transmit a hantavirus that causes hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS). Hantaviruses cause flu-like symptoms and death in more than one-third of cases, and there is no known treatment or vaccine. Norway rats, stocky with grayish-brown coats, can transmit murine typhus as well as contaminate food and surfaces.

- **Tick.** An adult tick has eight legs and is smaller than a sunflower seed. Ticks can transmit



**A pest management professional can help reduce the danger of pests like the deer mouse, which can transmit hantavirus.**

(Photo courtesy of CDC.)

diseases including Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, babesiosis, relapsing fever and tularemia.

“Not only do some pests cause disease, others are responsible for causing severe allergic reactions in humans and even death through bites or stings,” said Ron Harrison, Ph.D. and board-certified entomologist for Orkin, Inc. “Fire ants, yellow jackets, hornets and brown recluse spiders are prime examples of the most dangerous pests that do not transmit disease.”

Ways to prevent unwanted pests in homes and establishments include caulking seals on doors, windows and ceiling cracks; cleaning thoroughly and frequently; and, most importantly, contacting a pest control professional for prevention and treatment.

To learn more about North America's most dangerous pests, visit [www.Orkin.com](http://www.Orkin.com) to download a brochure. Call 1-800-800-ORKIN or visit [www.Orkin.com](http://www.Orkin.com) for a free home inspection.