

TRAVEL HEALTH UPDATE

How To Best The Pest—Wherever You Go

(NAPSA)—A little knowledge can help you keep bugs from putting the bite on you the next time you travel around the country, whether traveling for business, visiting friends, or gathering with family for the holidays.

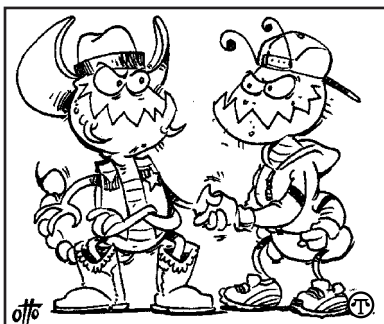
For one thing, remember that different regions feature different pest problems. Here are some hints that may help:

- Visitors to the Northeast could be surprised to learn that tiny deer ticks transmit Lyme disease. Over 23,000 cases of this neurological illness were reported in 2002, with almost 95 percent occurring in the Northeast. Other species of tick are behind the spread of Rocky Mountain spotted fever in the Southeast.

- Travelers from northern states may have never encountered an ant species that can pose a serious health threat. A vacation to the southern United States can introduce them to the dangers of stepping on a fire ant mound and having the feisty red ants swarm up their leg—stingers poised and ready. Stinging insects, including the fire ant, send over 500,000 people to the emergency room each year.

- Fun seekers in America's western states may find mosquito stings an unwanted nuisance. In Colorado alone, over 2,450 people contracted West Nile virus in 2003 (nearly 1/4 of all cases logged nationally).

- If you go to southwestern states such as Texas or Arizona, be aware that scorpions, which are nocturnal pests, like to hide in dark places during the day—including clothing, hats, shoes or other items left on the ground, such as baseball



Get the bugs out of an otherwise wonderful vacation by educating yourself about potential pests that make different parts of America their home.

gloves. When these inhabited items are worn or used, the scorpion stings in retaliation.

According to National Pest Management Association (NPMA) Public Affairs Director Cindy Mannes, "Unsuspecting tourists are great prey for pests. Locals know how to avoid dangerous pests and leave pest management up to the professionals. It can be a little more difficult for travelers. It is increasingly important that individuals know what pests to look for, how to avoid them and what to do if they cross your path."

To help, her organization developed a Web-based resource at www.pestworld.org that lists pests by region and gives helpful tips for avoiding them.

The NPMA is a professional organization knowledgeable about pests and the public health and property threats they pose. The organization is committed to educating consumers about these issues. You can learn more online at www.pestworld.org.