

State of the **SPIDER MARKET**

Exclusive Research:

SPIDER MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

SPIDER SERVICES: A GROWTH MARKET

RECLUSE, WIDOW SPIDERS REQUIRE SPECIAL TACTICS

GET CUSTOMERS INVOLVED TO SOLVE SPIDER ISSUES



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State of the
SPIDER MARKET

Pest management professionals identify best practice strategies, protocols and products for controlling nuisance and venomous spiders.



Spider Management

Best Practices

What makes customers call for spider control? Merely seeing one, reported 83 percent of pest management professionals in PCT's 2014 Spider Market Report.

"People just have a massive fear of spiders," said Josh Tennenbaum, operations director of Arizona Pest Control, Mesa, Ariz. Sighting "multiple spiders in a short time constitutes an emergency for some," added Andy Yant, owner of P.E.S.T. Inc., Goodlettsville, Tenn. According to the PCT report, more than 70 percent of PMPs said customers are concerned about spider infestations; forty-six percent believe arachnophobia is a significant factor driving spider control service.

Venomous spiders are a big concern. But while the black widow (43 percent) and brown recluse (34 percent) spiders pose problems in some areas, they account for only 15 and 13 percent of spider service calls, reported PMPs. Because of their secretive nature, it's sometimes difficult to find all brown recluse harborage sites in an account. One of the key signs of an infestation is their irregularly shaped, whitish-gray webs which may be located inside boxes, under household clutter, and in other out-of-the-way locations. Outside, brown recluse spiders are almost always associated with items lying or piled on the ground.

The most problematic spider for 77 percent of pest management professionals — representing 52 percent of service calls last year — was the nuisance house spider, according to the PCT report.

If spiders are important to the customer, they're important to us, said Dylan Ambauen, general manager of Sunrise Pest Management, Bremerton, Wash. Addressing their concerns is an "opportunity to demonstrate we're providing a valuable service," he said.

PMPs shared the following strategies for controlling spiders and providing customers peace of mind:

INSPECT OUT-OF-THE-WAY SPOTS – Examine a structure's exterior, as well as secluded and unfinished areas of attics, crawl-spaces, basements, storage areas and garages. Look underneath and behind moving boxes. "Different spiders seek different shelters," said Tim Runyon, president of Swat Pest Management, Evansville, Ind. According to the Mallis Handbook of Pest Control, PMPs should determine the source of a spider infestation, how they're entering the structure and contributing conditions.

IDENTIFY TO FAMILY – Spiders generally can be separated into broad categories, such as burrowers, web-spinners, active hunters, or sit-and-wait ambushers; being able to identify a spider to family is sufficient, according to Mallis. Identification is important when spider bites are alleged, as the uninformed may push to use unnecessary pesticides or close down facilities to control a venomous spider not on the premises.

REMOVE COBWEBS – Sixty-eight percent of PMPs remove cobwebs as part of their spider control protocol, according to the report. Using a telescoping duster to clean up webs, egg sacs and visible spiders makes it easier to monitor spider activity on future service calls. Tennenbaum applies a small amount of liquid residual or diatomaceous earth to the duster to help control spiders in eaves; technicians at Brock Lawn and Pest Control, Lynn Haven, Fla., dust using a pyrethrin aerosol for added control, said Operations

Vice President Jim Strickland.

Clearing webs “adds a whole level of professionalism” to the service, said Yant. It delivers the “wow factor;” homeowners think you’re “doing something extra,” added Mitch Taylor, general manager of Capital Pest Services, Raleigh, N.C.

GO FOR THE GLUE TRAP – According to the PCT report, 64 percent of PMPs use glue traps to monitor spider activity. Traps are an easy, inexpensive way to catch and kill spiders; they can be used in sensitive areas and provide “the best feedback we can get,” said Yant. If homeowners claim the service isn’t working because spiders are everywhere, but the trap shows minimal activity, “we know their tolerance is really low and they exaggerate,” he said. Place traps in non-visible places like corners and along baseboards behind furniture, and check them at every service visit.

ELIMINATE PREY – Reduce spiders’ food source and they have little reason to stick around, said Brian Reynolds, president of Reynolds Pest Management, Port Saint Lucie, Fla. An exterior, quarterly perimeter treatment that controls crickets, roaches, ants and other pests subsequently will reduce spider populations.

TARGET THE TREATMENT – PMPs use various methods to control spiders. More than half apply pesticides as their primary control, targeting the exterior (90 percent), cracks and crevices (70 percent), direct contact (65 percent) and spot treatments (51 percent) conducive to spiders. Mallis recommends treating where spiders crawl or construct webs, such as basement sill plates and box headers; around outdoor windows, doors, exterior light fixtures, under porches, behind down spouts, under eaves, and anywhere right angles (e.g., corners) are formed. Apply a residual dust or aerosol to cracks and crevices.

“Spider control isn’t extremely hard but you have to be thorough and treat all accessible areas that spiders like to be,” said Yant. The areas “we don’t get to are where they’re going to like it the most,” he said.

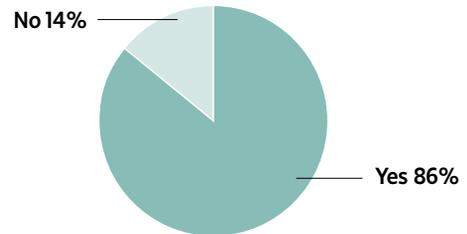
PICK THE RIGHT PRODUCT – Three-quarters of PMPs use liquid pyrethroids that target multiple insects. They reported choosing products that offer residual control (69 percent) and have labels that specify application locations (45 percent). Other product attributes valued by PMPs performing spider control services include quick kill, ease of use and products with minimal label restrictions.

More than 60 percent of PMPs said spider control products currently on the market are effective; more than 50 percent have callback rates of 1 to 4 percent. One way to reduce callbacks is to utilize a non-repellent insecticide that ensures spiders come in direct contact with the product.

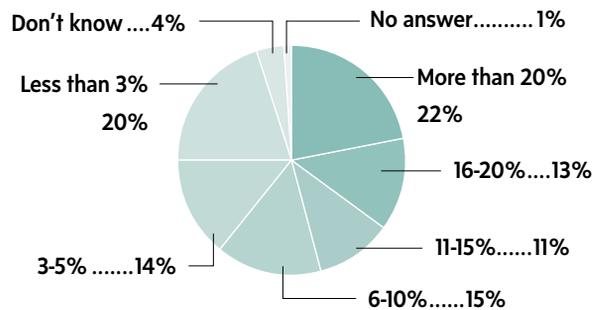
USE LESS INDOORS – Ambauen doesn’t spray insecticides inside homes for “the occasional spiders” homeowners encounter, suggesting instead that customers vacuum them up. Tennenbaum

Spider Services: A Growth Market

Does your company offer spider control services?



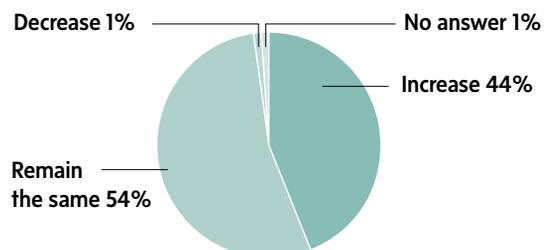
What percentage of your company’s overall service revenue is generated by spider control services?



How has the percentage of revenue generated from your company’s spider control services changed in the past year?



How do you expect the percentage of revenue generated from your company’s spider control services to change in the next year?



Source: PCT 2014 Spider Market Study conducted by Readex Research

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uses glueboards, applies diatomaceous earth to plumbing areas, and removes interior cobwebs. An exterior treatment usually keeps indoor nuisance spiders to a minimum; a crack-and-crevice treatment may be needed depending on the species, he said.

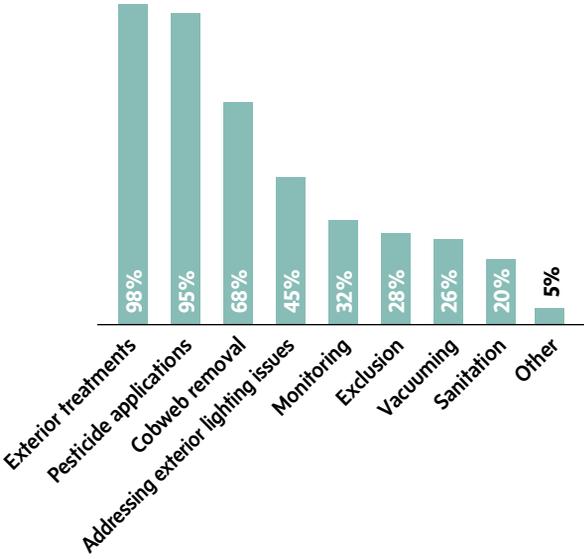
SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS – Customer education is a big part of successful spider control. A client is glad “to know some

facts and what to expect,” said Ambauen. Explain how the wind may blow spiderlings onto the house from elsewhere, creating the potential for reinfestation. Discuss the options that are available to the homeowners if they find a spider after treatment.

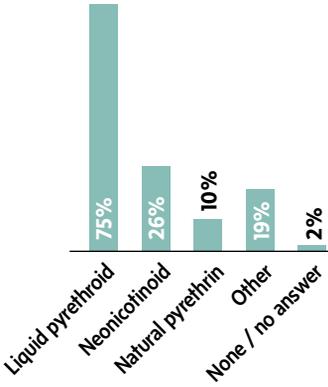
For many, the appearance of spiders and webs is a “visible gauge” of whether their quarterly general pest control program is working, Ambauen added. 🌱

Preferred Service Offerings & Product Attributes

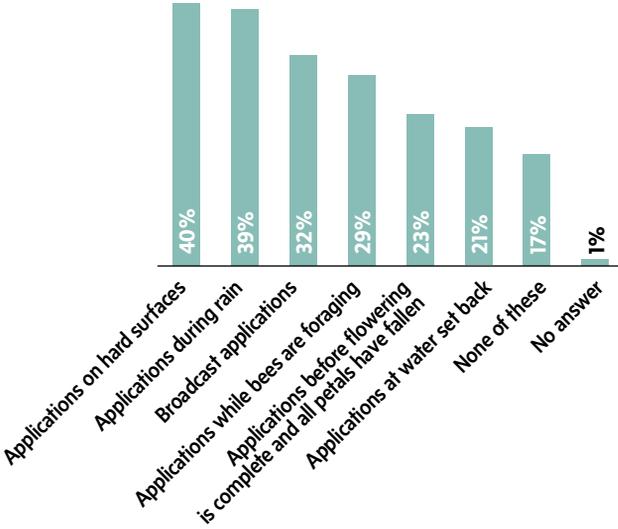
What types of products/services does your company use to control spiders?



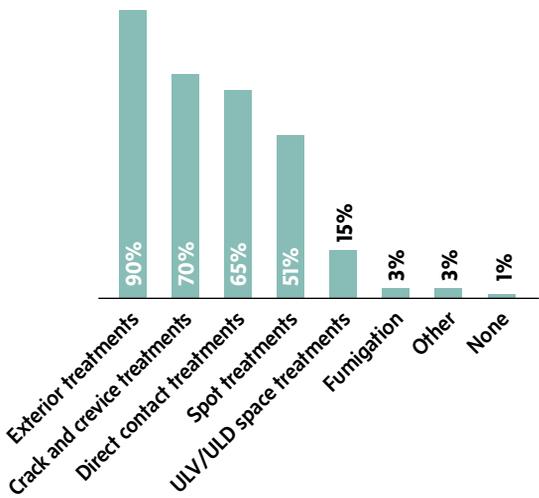
What product formulas does your company currently use in its spider control efforts?



Which of the following label restrictions would pose a challenge to your company when applying spider control products?



What types of insecticide treatments are part of your company's spider control protocol?



Source: PCT 2014 Spider Market Study conducted by Readex Research



Recluse, Widow Spiders Require Special Tactics

Most nuisance spiders are eradicated through general preventive pest maintenance programs. Those posing a health threat – namely brown recluse and widow spiders – require specific control strategies.

BROWN RECLUSE. Andy Yant, owner of P.E.S.T. Inc. in greater Nashville, said his region has a “pretty significant population” of brown recluse spiders; about one-third of the crawlspaces he inspects have them, he said. The brown recluse spider prefers cracks, crevices, wall voids and undisturbed attics, basements, crawlspaces and cardboard boxes. People often find them during home renovations.

If clients are seeing brown recluse spiders out in the open, they’ve probably had an infestation for some time, said Tim Runyon, president of Swat Pest Management in Evansville, Ind., where the pest is a “horrible” problem and populations explode quickly. Females are harder to kill than males; they’ll eat their young to survive, and stay holed up for a long time, he said.

Compared to a nuisance spider treatment, which averages \$150, a brown recluse treatment costs \$500 to \$600, “mainly because of the time involved” to treat cracks, crevices and voids, said Yant. He cited one job that took several months and many phone calls to reassure the property owner and tenants. Runyon recommends monthly service. In such cases, perimeter treatments with natural products is an option.

BLACK, BROWN AND RED WIDOWS. Widow spiders primarily are found in southern and western parts of the United States. In Florida, four cause concern: the southern black widow, northern black widow, brown widow and red widow, said Brian Reynolds, president of Reynolds Pest Management in Port Saint Lucie. These spiders generally are found outdoors; they build irregular webs and prefer secluded areas where they “can wait for their victim to come to them,” he said.

Reynolds recalled a job where black widows established themselves in the outside overhang of a rural garage that sheltered forklifts. Spiders were dropping down into the machines, posing a threat to maintenance workers and operators. Reynolds removed spiders and egg sacks by mechanical means, applied a residual product, and inspected “every nut and bolt” of the equipment, under the dashboards and inside the door handles. It took almost 10 weeks to gain control, he noted. Experts suggested these extra tactics to control poisonous spiders:

Protect yourself – Always wear a long-sleeved shirt, pants and gloves.

Use a vacuum – According to PCT’s 2014 Spider Market

Report, 26 percent of PMPs mechanically remove spiders and egg sacks during inspection with a vacuum cleaner. This is an effective control measure and signals the “difference between spray jockeys and pest professionals,” said Runyon.

Target cracks, crevices and voids – For widow spiders, Reynolds treats outdoor cracks and crevices in the structure with an aerosol product, and then seals these spaces.

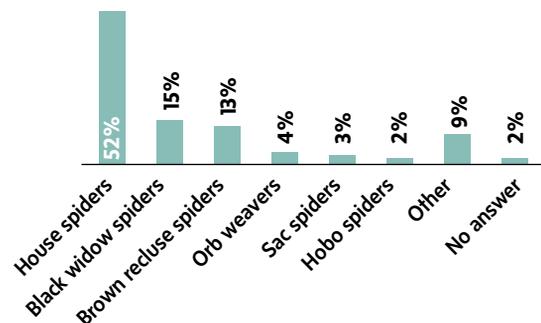
For brown recluse spiders, apply a residual dust or aerosol product to interior wall voids behind electrical switch plates (use a plastic duster tip to prevent electrical shock); this targets spiders following wires and pipes down from the attic, states the Mallis Handbook of Pest Control. In basements and crawlspaces, dust the cracks under sill plates and the voids of brick and stone foundation walls. Use a suspended concentrate, microencapsulated formulation or water-tolerant dust in damp areas. In attics, Runyon suggested dusting under insulation and around can lights that emit heat. Drill through attic flooring to treat the voids between the floor and ceiling of the rooms below.

Attack in the off season – Runyon treats attics and crawlspaces for brown recluse spiders in the late fall, winter and early spring when population thresholds are low. It’s more difficult to gain control during the warm season when their numbers can explode, he said.

Monitor and follow up – The harborages of widow and brown recluse spiders can be difficult to locate and treat, so monitor spider activity with glueboards and educate customers on why more than one treatment is required. *

Commonly Encountered Species

What spider species represented the largest percentage of your company’s service calls in the past year?



Source: PCT 2014 Spider Market Study conducted by Readex Research

Get Customers Involved to Solve Spider Issues

Pest management is a partnership. Educate customers on how to reduce potential harborage and the conditions that support spider infestations:

ELIMINATE CLUTTER, BOXES – Spiders like to hide; clutter offers plenty of places to do this, said Andy Yant, president, P.E.S.T. Inc. Sweep and vacuum regularly, and store cardboard boxes off the floor and away from walls.

CLEAN UP THE YARD – Trim back vegetation near the structure to discourage the pests on which spiders prey, advised Dylan Ambauen, general manager, Sunrise Pest Management. Move woodpiles away from the house and stack it off the ground on supports; remove piles of lumber, debris, stones and boards, stated the Mallis Handbook of Pest Control.

MINIMIZE MOISTURE – Improve ventilation in attics and crawlspaces to reduce moisture. When humidity decreases,

so do the insects and the spiders that feed on them, said Tim Runyon, president, Swat Pest Management. His company insulates attics and encloses crawlspaces; the resulting controlled environments don't support insect populations.

REPOSITION LIGHTS – Exterior lights attract insects and, subsequently, spiders; that's why 45 percent of pest management professionals address exterior lighting as part of their spider control program, found PCT's 2014 Spider Market Report. Mallis suggests switching mercury vapor with sodium vapor lights, and equipping homes with yellow "bug light" bulbs. Runyon advised taking the light down and pointing it at the building; the wider beam provides better security and draws the insects away from the building.

KEEP THEM OUT – Excluding all spiders is nearly impossible, but screening windows and vents, installing weather stripping on doors and windows, and caulking gaps and cracks can prevent some from getting into the home, stated Mallis. *



Common Venomous Spiders

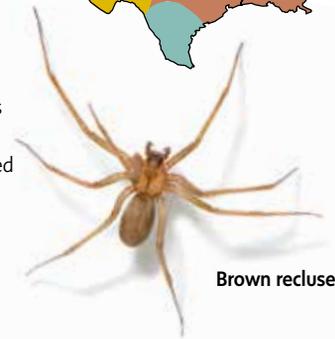
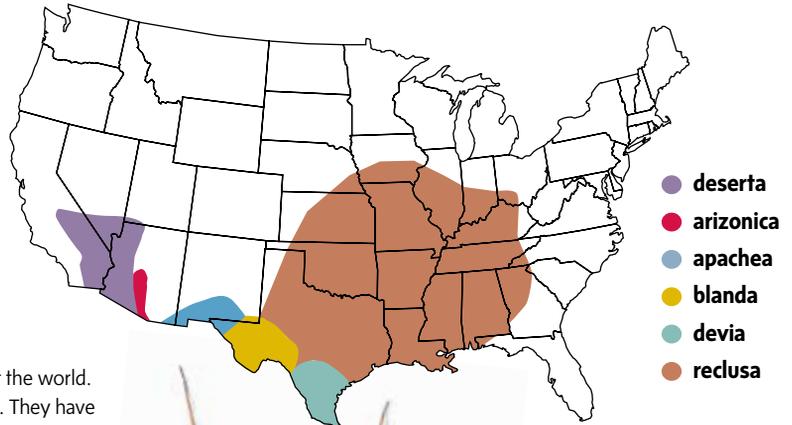
Brown Recluse

BROWN RECLUSE SPIDERS are found in the south central and southwestern United States. According to the University of California Riverside, they are about 3/8 inches long; have six eyes arranged in pairs, with one pair in front and a pair on either side; a dark violin shape on the cephalothorax; uniformly light-colored legs (no stripes, no bands) with fine hairs; and a uniformly colored abdomen. The spider leaves its shed skins in an asterisk-like pattern against a flat surface, stated the Mallis Handbook of Pest Control.

Widows

Widow spiders are found in temperate regions throughout the world. Females typically are 1/3 to 1/2 inch long; males are smaller. They have globose, shiny abdomens and moderately long, slender legs. According to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, black widows are jet black with red hourglass-like shapes on the abdomen; red widows have an orange-red head and legs and black abdomen with a single, flattened red triangle on the underside. The brown widow is a mix of tan and brown with black accents and an orange hourglass shape on its abdomen.

Range of recluse (genus *Loxosceles*) spiders in the United States



Brown recluse

Spider Season

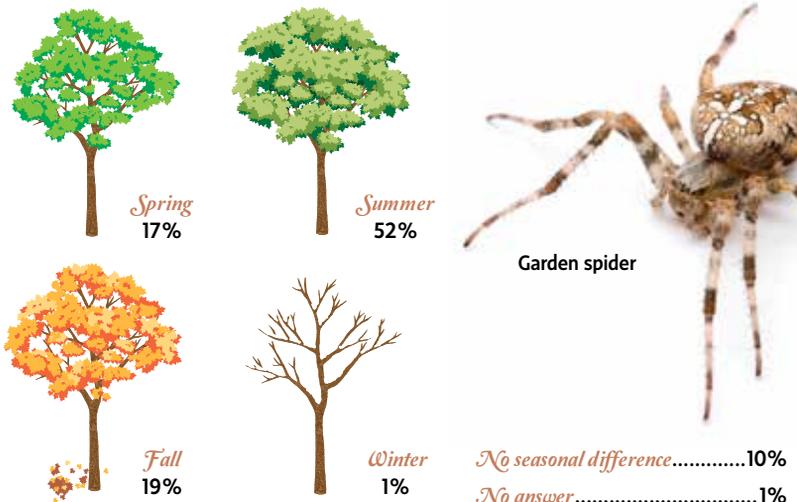
ACCORDING TO PCT'S 2014 Spider Market Report, 52 percent of pest management professionals said summer is the busiest season for spider control.

"As the heat builds up, we get more and more calls," said Andy Yant, owner of P.E.S.T. Inc., Goodlettsville, Tenn. A change of seasons tends to drive spiders indoors, added Tim Runyon, president of Swat Pest Management, Evansville, Ind. Arachnids are active year round in Florida; it's not unusual for snowbirds returning to a house left vacant for six months to have spider issues, said Brian Reynolds, president of Reynolds Pest Management, Port Saint Lucie, Fla.

PMPs reported finding more spiders near bodies of water and in wooded areas. Therefore, around heavily-webbed docks and bodies of water, natural products are a treatment option.

An estimated 50,000 spiders exist per green acre, said Reynolds. "For the most part, they're beneficial;" you "only want to target the harmful ones," he said.

What season tends to be the busiest for your company providing spider control services?



Source: PCT 2014 Spider Market Study conducted by Readex Research



Garden spider

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