

## Bug of the Month by Jim Revell "Invasive Species"

On Monday, December 9, 2013, the Associated Press released an article about an invasive cockroach found in New York City at The High Line, a park on Manhattan's West Side. This cockroach, first discovered by an exterminator working in the park in 2012, had never before been seen in the U.S.



[www9.plala.or.jp](http://www9.plala.or.jp)

The "Periplaneta japonica," well documented in Asia, can withstand even the cold, harsh winters of New York.

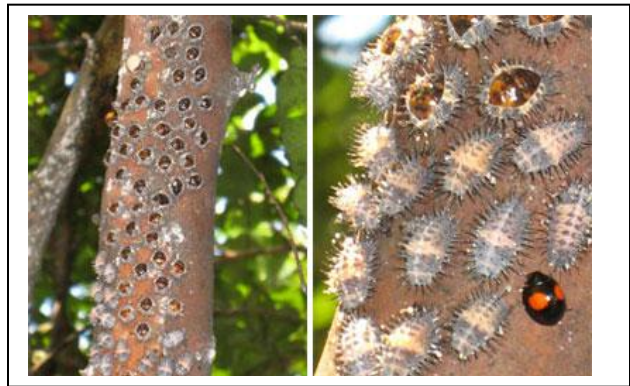
At present, there is little concern regarding the Periplaneta becoming a problem as there are already competing species in the urban environment; however, several entomologists point out that the species should be monitored (according to my wife, it should be monitored *very closely*). The source that brought it to the U.S. was likely soil / plant material brought in for use in landscaping the park.

After I read this article, I wondered if there were other such insects out there which may loom in our Commonwealth of Virginia future. Here are a few others I came across:

### ⌘ CREPE MYRTLE BARK SCALE

In Baton Rouge, Louisiana, there was a news release distributed October 1, 2013, about a new invasive scale insect, the Crepe Myrtle Bark Scale. There are reports of the scale in Shreveport, LA, Dallas, TX and, possibly, also, in Houma and Lafayette, LA. The extent of damage is still being assessed, but the invasion is spreading, primarily by humans. The initial source is not known, but it is known to exist in China.

*I thought about the crepe myrtles that dot our Bedford area landscape.*



[kcmga.org](http://kcmga.org)

### ⌘ ELM SEED BUG

Posted July 19, 2012, AP, in Boise, Idaho, "Swarming invasive insect found in US for 1<sup>st</sup> time." This insect, the Elm Seed Bug, is commonly found in South Central Europe. Discovered in southwestern Idaho, federal officials confirmed it was the first sighting in the U.S.

The insect doesn't pose a threat to trees but may become a nuisance, as it tends to enter buildings and homes in large swarms (remember the multi-colored Asian Lady Beetle here in Bedford a few years ago).

The ¼ inch Elm Seed Bug feeds on elm tree seeds and resembles a tiny brown cockroach with triangular markings on its back. The investigation continues on how it got here and how they might spread.



[abcnews.go.com](http://abcnews.go.com)

## ⌘ NYLANDERIA FULVA aka Raspberry Crazy Ant

The “RCA’s” first name, Raspberry, comes from Tom Raspberry, a pest control professional who first discovered it near Houston, TX, in 2002. *As an aside, I am ever on the lookout for a “new” bug that might be named the “Jim Bug.” ☺*

The RCA’s middle name, “Crazy,” comes from its rapid and random movements. The RCA is known, additionally, as the Tawny Crazy Ant. The pest is thought to have arrived in the U.S. aboard a commercial ship, probably from South America.



bugguide.net

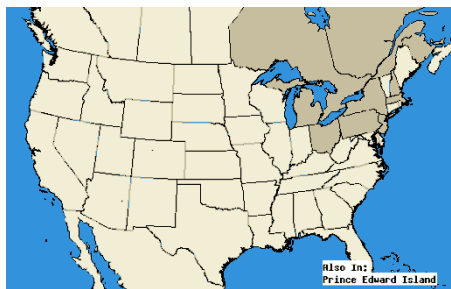
The Raspberry Crazy Ant quickly became a problem as it infiltrated homes and businesses; even NASA had issues with the ants (*Houston: “We have a problem”*) and had to call in exterminators. The problem is its affinity for electrical wiring. These ants are known to rapidly colonize and, for homeowners, can be nearly impossible to eradicate once a colony has been formed.

The Raspberry Crazy Ant does bite, causing a relatively sharp pain that quickly fades. There is a conscious effort to stop the spread of the ants, but their movement by humans makes it a difficult task. They’re likely transported via containers and materials such as garbage, yard debris, bags, loads of compost, potted plants and/or bales of hay, making trucks, railroads and airplanes avenues for their expansion.

⌘ The above were a few potential invaders that I share with you, but there are others - - such as the **Khapra Beetle**, one of the world’s most feared stored product pests (fortunately, at this time, all infestations discovered in the U.S. have been eradicated); the **European Grapevine Moth**, which has already been found in California and can damage crops throughout the growing season; the **Viburnum Leaf Beetle**, officially identified in Massachusetts, feeds exclusively on many different species of Viburnum; and, last but not least, the **Winter Moth, aka the “Munch Inch Worm”** which is wanted for stripping trees of their leaves and fruit, causing major damage.



wintermoth.com



Viburnum Leaf Beetle; bugguide.net



cisr.ucr.edu

## References:

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