

# What's **BUZZING**

How to Detect Creepy Critters &  
Other Pesky Pests Around Your House

# YOU?



**Raymond Bial**

## Snug as a Bug in a Rug

Every child wants to live in a warm and cozy home. Every child wants to have a pleasant backyard, nice park, and good school. And your parents want to provide you with a safe and comfortable home. And all of us want our dogs and cats and other pets to be happy, too. We all want to be “snug as a bug in a rug” in the words of American inventor and statesman Benjamin Franklin.

However, many real bugs and other pests want to be “snug as a bug” in our homes. These pests come in many shapes and sizes—from fleas to furry mice. Most seem to be invisible invaders. We often don't see them, because they are so tiny, like dust mites. Or they hide in dark corners, like spiders. Or that mouse, wriggling its nose, might sneak into

the house on a cold November night.

So what can you do about these uninvited guests? You can go on pest patrol and learn many fascinating facts about pests in and around your home. As a detective, you can identify, or “ID,” common household pests. You can do a little investigate work by looking at mug shots of “Unwanted Pests” in books and on websites. It can be fun to get some background on the rap sheets your suspects: how they got their names, or aliases; how they came to North America; how they break into homes; what is their modus operandi, or way of operating as little pests.

“God in his wisdom  
made the fly And  
then forgot to  
tell us why”

- Ogden Nash





**You**

can become a bug detective and investigate creepy crawly insects and spiders. Where are their hideouts in your house or yard? Why do we like ladybugs and fireflies, but not mosquitoes, fleas, ticks, bed bugs, and other biting, stinging insects? Why are some insects fascinating, even useful, and others dangerous? You can become a rodent sleuth and learn about mice, rats, and other furry animals. Why are some animals adorable and others so annoying or even harmful that they become pests? And you can become a weed inspector and learn why we like many plants, such as flowers, while others become pests.

Who knows, you might crack the case and solve the age-old

mysteries of how to deal with pests. But first here is some background information about your suspects:

According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, the words pest and pestilence come from the Latin *pestis*, meaning “deadly contagious disease” or “plague.” A pest can also be “one that pesters or annoys.” Today, a pest is any insect, small animal, or weed that is troublesome or harmful to people. Some pests are petty offenders; others are dangerous—real bad guys or tough cookies—like mosquitoes that spread West Nile virus and ticks that carry Lyme disease.





# Debug THE Myths

