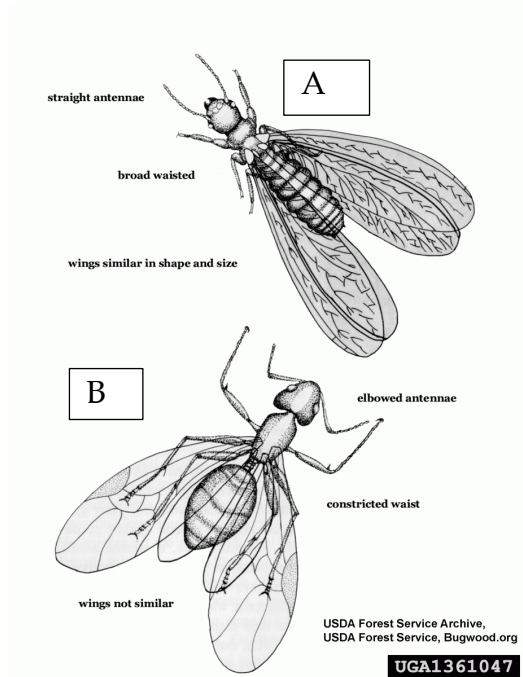


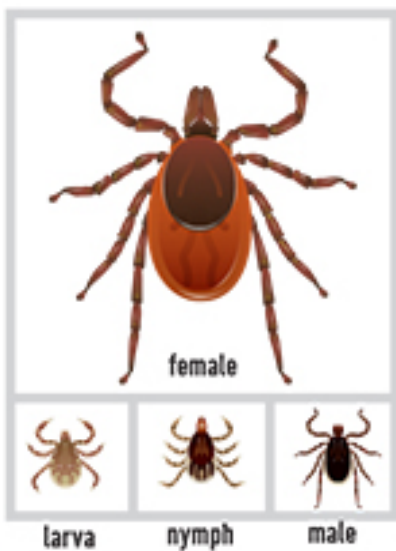
Identifying Household and Garden Pests in the Northeast US

- Look at the picture to the right. Can you tell which is the ant and termite? What are the differences?
 - Termite: straight antennae, broad waist, similar wing shape and size
 - Ant: elbowed antennae, constricted waist, wings not similar
- Practice using the **Pest Identification Key for Household Pests in the Northeastern US** at <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/whats-bugging-you/pest-identification-center/> to answer the following:

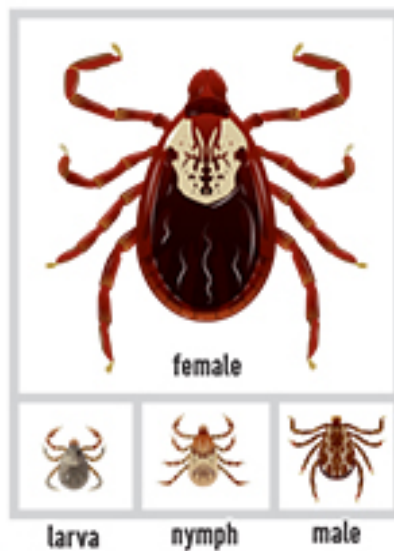


I have 6 legs, soft wings that are NOT covered in scales or leave residue on hands when touched. I have wings that are clear or cloudy and thin; four wings that may be joined together with two separate attachment points on my body. I have 3 distinct body parts, with an abdomen separated by a thin waist. I am about 1/8"- 1/2" What am I? **Ant**

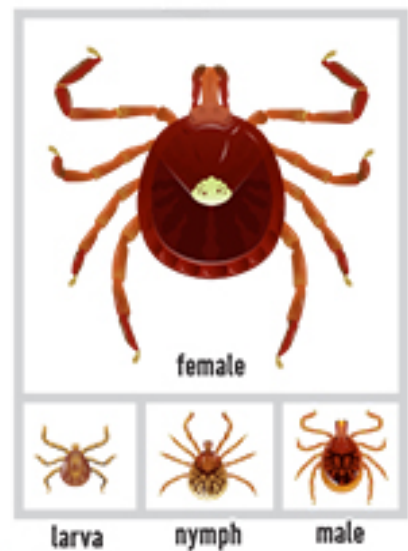
- Identify the three insects below:



1. **Blacklegged (Deer) Tick**



2. **American Dog (Wood) Tick**



3. **Lone Star Tick**

Photos from <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/>

4. What are the steps to take to protect us from ticks?

Daily tick check, dress the part, wear tick-killing clothing, use repellents, avoid tick habitats, steer clear of hitchhikers, remove ticks safely, and protect your pets. [Sourced from <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/whats-bugging-you/ticks/how-do-i-protect-myself-ticks/>]

5. Where am I likely to find ticks? When are they active?

The three main tick species have different habitat preferences and tolerances:

The blacklegged tick requires high humidity or moisture to survive. Therefore, this tick is most often found in the forest and at the forest edge where tree cover, dense vegetation and leaf litter provide a moist environment. This tick will search for hosts typically below adult knee-height by holding onto vegetation with their front legs out as hosts pass by — a behavior known as questing. Because adult ticks feed on larger animals, this life stage might quest higher above the ground to find a host — up to adult waist-height.

The lone star tick is able to survive in a wide range of habitats, from the shade of the forest to the sun of a lawn. Unlike the blacklegged tick that quests and waits for prey to brush past it, the lone star tick may actively walk toward its prey, even across pavement or sandy areas.

The American dog tick can survive in warm, dry locations such as roadsides, trails and lawns. Larvae and nymphs mostly feed on small mammals; the adult climbs grass, brush, or twigs to find medium-sized mammals and humans.

Ticks can be active any time of the year when temperatures are above freezing, including winter. There are even anecdotes of ticks being active when the air temperature is as low as 26o F and the sun has warmed a particular patch of ground. For the blacklegged tick, the peak in larval activity is August to late September; peak nymphal tick activity is June to July, and adults are active in spring (March to late April) and fall (October to December). Most cases of Lyme disease are reported in the summer, after people were exposed to nymph-stage ticks. For additional information, see It's (still) tick season — and will be evermore. For up-to-date tick activity in your region of the U.S., visit Tick Encounter Resource Center: Current Tick Activity. [Sourced from <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/whats-bugging-you/ticks/tick-faqs/#where-live>]

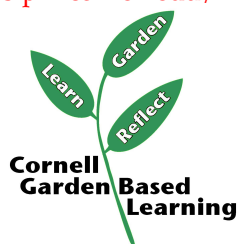
6. What is the first step in managing ticks in my yard? What other steps can be taken?

Habitat management is one way to reduce the number of ticks in your yard, or help you to avoid ticks. These recommendations are especially helpful for reducing encounters with blacklegged ticks, but may be less effective against lone star ticks.

Create Tick-Free Zones. Make areas of the yard where you and family spend time as open and sunny as possible. Prune overhanging branches, keep the lawn mowed to a reasonable height (three inches is ideal for turf health), limit groundcover, and remove leaf litter and other organic debris. If possible, swing sets, gazebos, and other yard attractions should be kept away from the woods edge. These measures are especially helpful when dealing with blacklegged ticks, which have a high humidity requirement (see Where do ticks live?).

Create Borders. Knowing that blacklegged ticks are most common in wooded areas, borders can be used to set boundaries around areas that people should avoid. For example, a three-foot wide mulch or stone border can be used to teach children not to enter wooded areas. These borders are not designed to kill ticks, but to alter human behavior.

Keep Wildlife Away. Ticks are often moved on their hosts, which range from small mammals such as mice, chipmunks and birds, to large animals including deer. Because ticks drop off their host after feeding, it is possible that ticks can be dropped wherever wildlife roam. Therefore, it might be a good idea to keep bird feeders, garbage cans, stacked firewood, and other potentially attractive items as far away from the home as possible (Note: this recommendation is not based on scientific research, but rather on tick biology and best practices for pest management). Deer fencing may also reduce the number of ticks on a property, but does not exclude other hosts such as small mammals that can transport ticks. [Sourced from: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/whats-bugging-you/ticks/tick-faqs/#how-limit>]



References: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/>

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Author: Donna Alese Cooke

Reviewer: Fiona Doherty