



**"Dedicated to finding effective solutions for bird mite infestations of humans and their environment, encouraging those afflicted, facilitating research and a better understanding of human parasitosis."**

- Home
- **\*\*FAQ\*\***
- Mighty Mite
- Bird Mite Nightmare!
- A House Infested...
- Mental Anguish
- **Strategies**
- Forum
- Research
- Other Resources
- Diary
- Contact

Keep a spray bottle handy throughout the day and night to spritz on the skin when bird mites are bothersome. It could be a solution of orange oil, Listerene, diluted Tea Tree oil, vinegar and salt water, etc.

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## Strategies For A Bird Mite Infestation

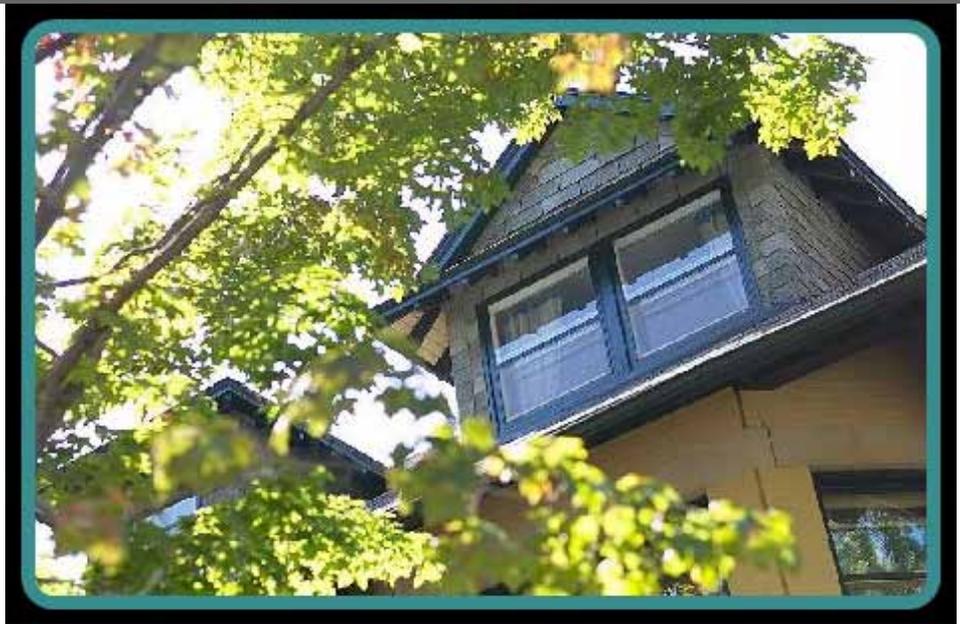
Parasitic mites can be introduced into the home environment in numerous ways. A vacated bird's nest is just one scenario. The family cat could bring home an infested bird or rodent. Used furniture, carpeting, and clothing, can also be a harbinger of mites. Landscaping material could be host to straw itch mites. Although this website is dedicated to bird mite infestation, many of the strategies presented here can also be beneficial for other types of mites encountered in the home.

[Printer Friendly Page](#)

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### ENVIRONMENT

Bird mites tend to wander away from a vacated birds nest in late spring and early summer. They will then look for an appropriate host and frequently it is a person in the nearest house or apartment. To avoid being the recipient of these unwanted guests, remove bird feeders and bird houses from the yard and trim tree limbs near the house. Be wary of birds nesting in nearby trees, and underneath window air conditioners. To remove a vacated nest, wear vinyl gloves and place the nest in a sealed bag in the trash. Clothes should be removed and washed immediately. Spray around eaves and windows with an effective miticide.



**To avoid being the host to unwanted bird mite guests, trim overhanging tree limbs and branches in the spring. Also, trim shrubs and over-growth near windows. Use screening to cover chimneys, broken eaves, and other places where birds can build nests on the home.**

**Small birds often will build a nest underneath a window air conditioner unit, hidden from sight. It provides protection from predators and the weather in the spring and summer. Unfortunately, they often leave behind bird mites after the young birds leave the premises. The mites then become unwelcome guests in the home. It is a frequent complaint from people with bird mites in the home. To prevent birds from nesting there; measure and cut aluminum foil and duct tape it to the bottom sides of the a/c unit and the window frame.**

**Once a home has been invaded by bird mites, they are very difficult to remove. They are too small to be easily seen and will hide in places that make it difficult to clean or spray with insecticides. **If the home invasion was only recent, then you may want to consult with a PCO who is familiar with bird mites.****

**Unfortunately, many PCOs are not experienced with bird mite infestations or they may need a sample before spraying, which can be difficult to obtain. A miticide fumigant is often the ideal way to get rid of them in a heavily infested home. Mite samples can often be sent to a local county cooperative extension or a university entomology dept, to have them identified.**

**TIP: No matter which treatment option is used, a follow-up treatment is usually required about 7-10 days later to eradicate the previously unhatched mites.**

**A home that is heavily infested is best treated with tenting and fumigation. Nothing else will be as effective. However, many do not have this option**

available; either from being in an apartment or else the expense is too much, as it could easily exceed \$3000 to fumigate a home. Vikane gas is often the treatment of choice for fumigation, at 10x concentration. Some PCOs will resort to ULV fogging, with mixed results; depending on the chemicals used and how thorough the application. Keep in mind a ULV fogger can produce particles no smaller than about 5 microns, whereas a thermal fogger produces particles as small as .5 microns; which can more effectively penetrate into infested furniture fabrics, carpeting, etc. An effective miticide (not pyrethrin or permethrin) needs to be used and a repeat application needs to be done about a week or two later. Also, wall cavities, crawl spaces, and the attic should be treated with a residual chemical, such as Delta Dust.

**TIP: To capture mite samples from a heavily infested room place a pan of hot, steaming water in the middle of a darkened room at night. Place a single light over the pan, preferably a red IR lamp. Leave the room undisturbed for a couple of hours. You will need to use a strong magnifier to see them in the water. Place samples in a vial with alcohol to preserve.**

Bird mites will more frequently infest the bedroom, since they are most active at night. **The mattress, box spring and pillows should be encased in zippered vinyl protectors, to prevent infestation.** They can be wiped down nightly with a Swifter wet mop that is sprayed with a 50/50 solution of vinegar and 91% rubbing alcohol, orange oil, or with a diluted bleach solution. Alternately, you could use a good bug spray a few hours before bedtime. Other non-toxic alternatives include an enzyme cleaner, Boric Acid and water solution, Dawn soap solution, etc. This spraying and cleaning is a royal pain to do nightly but it can help significantly with getting a few hours sleep.

**FYI: Strong scents in the environment can help keep bird mites from swarming; as it limits their ability to communicate with each other.**

If possible, remove the headboard and footboard to minimize the places where the mites can hide. A metal bed frame is easier to clean than wood, as wooden ones are more easily infested. You can also have the legs of the bed frame wrapped with sticky flypaper so that they aren't able to crawl up from the floor. You should keep the bed away from the walls so they cannot get on the bed so easily. During a heavy infestation, the bed linen should be used only once and then put in a sealed plastic bag with mothballs until washed. Clean linens should be applied right before bed.

**Please do not donate or give away used furniture and clothing that has been infested by mites. They should be discarded in the trash. The person who never receives these items will be forever grateful!!!**

**Carpet, especially in the bedroom, makes it hard to eliminate a mite infestation.** Wood and tile floors can more easily be cleaned. Evercare, which makes the lint rollers, also makes a large handle wide tape roller that can be used on hard floors, and even the walls. If the floor is carpeted, daily vacuuming may be required. One solution that is somewhat effective with carpeting is a mite dusting powder. For a long standing infestation the carpet may need to be removed.

**FYI:** If the home has air conditioning and a dehumidifier, and the humidity is kept low, mite activity will be considerably less than a home without a/c in a warm and humid climate.

**When a room is heavily infested, bird mites will not only be in the carpeting but on the walls and ceiling; especially if the carpet has been recently treated with a mite dusting powder or bug spray.** A Swifter wet mop can be used for these surfaces. Apply an effective bug spray to the pad and wipe down the walls, ceilings, and other hard surfaces, preferably in the evening when mite activity increases.



**MITE DUSTING POWDER:** An empty talc bottle that is partially filled with Sevin 10% dust and Hartz Flea & Tick Powder can be an effective miticide. Use 5 parts Sevin to 1 part Hartz, and make the container about half full.

The dusting powder can be puffed onto the carpet, in the car, behind cabinets, in closets, etc. Avoid breathing the dust. A non-toxic mite dusting powder can be a 50/50 mixture of Boric Acid powder (used for cockroaches) and Diatomaceous Earth.

**Daily vacuuming is one of the most important things to do for reducing mite activity in the home.** A small hand held vac is required for all the surface cleaning. You can use it on your clothing, on your skin, small surfaces like the computer, furniture, etc. The filter should be strong enough to prevent them from escaping. Duct tape the opening after use to prevent the mites from escaping. The Black & Decker Dust Buster is often recommended, as it seems to have a good filter and more suction than some of the other inexpensive hand vacs. When using an upright floor vac on carpeting, be sure to vacuum in hidden areas as mites tend to hide during the day. Seal the end of the bag with duct tape after use and put it in the freezer until it is used again. Bagless vacs are not a good idea and a bag type vac is preferred. For the car and for remote locations, a cordless vac can be used, although a car wash vac is more powerful and should be used frequently.

Household furniture is another place where bird mites like to hide. They seem to have an affinity for cotton and most fabrics. Leather and wood furniture is preferred to upholstered furniture, as it is much easier to clean and less susceptible to infestation. The mite dusting powder can be applied to the underside of furniture.

**Remove clutter from living spaces to minimize the places bird mites can hide. They generally will hide during the day, and so stacks of magazines, newspapers, etc, should be discarded. Personal items should be kept in sealed plastic bags whenever possible. Mothballs can be added to the bags as needed.**

**TIP:** Use the chemical type of mothballs with Paradichlorobenzene, not the 'old fashion' type, when storing clothing, etc. Keep in mind the chemical can attack some plastics, so precaution is needed for some items.

#### **AUTOMOBILE**

The automobile can be a major headache for those afflicted with mites. They can burrow into the headliner, the seats, the carpeting, in the dash, etc. Leather seats are preferred to cloth seats, and even a sun roof can help keep the mites away some while driving. Mite dusting powder can be applied to the carpeting.

**If using a fogger: Turn the heater on high for a few minutes to stimulate mite activity. Fog in the evening and make sure the outside air vent and windows are closed, allow to stay closed until morning. Remove a battery terminal to eliminate any risk of electrical problems. Cover the plastic on the dash with something to prevent the aerosol from fading the clear plastic. Raid makes a home fogger with Cypermethrin that can be used in the car (using the precautions mentioned).**

**Other tips for reducing mite activity in the car include: Hanging a no-pest-strip from the rear view mirror at night, keeping a cordless vac handy, using a lint roller for pulling them off the skin, placing Bounce fabric sheets in all the seats cushions, placing the car in the hot sun in the summer, and in the winter keep the windows down slightly on cold nights (as extreme temperatures will limit their ability to reproduce and aggressively bite).**

**Regarding insecticides; Pyrethrin and Permethrin are not effective against bird mites, don't waste your money on these products. Better choices are those with Tralomethrin, Bifenthrin, Cyfluthrin or Esfenvalerate. It is important to vary the type of bug spray used every once in a while as they become tolerant to most things being used.**



**Some effective miticides include Spectracide's 'Bug Stop' with Lambda-Cyhalothrin, Bayer's 'Power Force' with Cyfluthrin (concentrate), and Hot Shot's 'Ultra' with Imiprothrin and Esfenvalerate.**

**WARNING...Always use caution with insecticides and other chemical products, especially in a household with children or pets. Everyone's tolerance to chemical exposure is different, so please consult your health care provider if uncertain.**

## **HYGIENE**

### **SKIN TREATMENT**

**Daily skin cleansing is important to reduce the mite itching and biting, as bird mites seem to thrive on the skin.** Showering is often more effective than bathing, although some have reported good success with a hot bath using Epsom salt. Mites will not die in warm water and so just sitting in a tub will not help. Whether taking a shower or bath, use a loofah scrub pad to remove mites from the skin. Add Epsom salt to a loofah scrub pouch and allow it to dissolve while scrubbing vigorously.

**Coal Tar** is very effective for itchy skin, and a product highly recommended is Denorex 'Therapeutic Strength' shampoo, which has 2.5% Coal Tar. This is not only used as a hair shampoo, but as a body wash. It is more effective to shower completely first thing in the morning and the last thing at night. A concentrated Coal Tar soap is available at some health food stores. At times after showering or bathing it may be necessary to use a diluted bleach solution to relieve the intense itching and kill the mites on the skin. Spritz this on with a spray bottle (avoid getting it in the eyes), and allow to stay on for a minute or so. After drying off use a medicated talc with menthol, such as Gold Bond 'extra strength'. The tub/shower should also be sprayed with a diluted bleach solution after use.

For the frequently intense itching and skin irritation, a strong anti-itch medication can be helpful. Lanacane 'Maximum Strength' works good. Even a muscle pain relieving product, like 'extra strength' Ben-Gay with menthol and camphor, can often help ease the irritation. Some have had success with **Arrid Extra Dry** antiperspirant for getting mites off the skin. The active ingredient is Aluminum Chlorohydrate 24%. It seems to be effective for repelling or killing the mites, and can also be sprayed onto clothing, etc.

**An anti-histamine can often help to reduce the irritation on the skin and reduce the sensation of biting.** Some have reported that Zyrtec helps reduce the sensation of crawling and itching. And at night Benadryl can help with these symptoms, as well as to help the person relax and fall asleep. On occasion the physician or dermatologist may need to prescribe something stronger.

**TIP: Take a Bounce fabric sheet and spray some orange oil cleaner onto the sheet. Rub the skin vigorously with the wetted sheet. It can provide some temporary relief from the biting and itching.**

#### **HAIR/SCALP**

**Many with thick hair, especially women, have complaints of mites on the scalp, especially at night. Besides the coal tar shampoo, a vinegar/water rinse can be useful when washing the hair and scalp. Some find Tea Tree Oil also helps when added to the shampoo. At bedtime, a shower cap can be worn. Place one or more Bounce fabric sheets in the cap to help repel the mites.**

#### **MOUTH**

**To keep mites out of the mouth and nose when sleeping, the following mixture can help: Mix together some sublimed sulfur powder and Vaseline in a small jar and apply around the lips and nose at night before bed. Sublimed sulfur (flower of sulfur) can be obtained from a drug store without a prescription. Some have had good success using either Sulfur 8 or Aquaphor, applied to the skin at night. Others have recommended an anti-fungal cream applied around the mouth, nose and even genitals at night. Wearing a flea&tick collar around the neck at night may also help. Other solutions include putting Bounce fabric sheets or menthol crystals in the bed to repel them. Gargle with full strength original flavor Listerine daily when they are in the mouth.**

#### **NOSTRILS**

**Saline nasal flush is good for clearing mites out of the nose and sinus cavities. Obtain 'sea salt' from a health food store, mix about 1 tsp of salt with about 2 ounces of warm water, and mix it until it dissolves. Use a small syringe bulb (like what is used for flushing out ear wax), and fill this with the solution. Tilt your head back and apply the warm salt water solution into your nostrils and sinuses, and then flush it out completely. Another option would be to make a Hydrogen Peroxide and warm water solution to flush out the nostrils. You may need to do this a time or two each day, especially in the morning if the mites were active at night.**

#### **EARS**

**Mack's silicone earplugs are effective for keeping mites out of the ears at night while sleeping. During the day, a dropper bottle that has a 50/50 solution of rubbing alcohol and white vinegar, can be effective for clearing mites out of the ears. For ears that itch, hydrogen peroxide can be used. Leave it in for a couple of minutes and then clear it out completely.**

#### **EYES**

**To keep mites out of the eyes while sleeping, swimming goggles are effective.**

The low-profile type are less obtrusive and more comfortable to wear. Be sure that they are snug fitting around the edges in order to keep the mites away.



#### CLOTHES/LINENS

**A good lint roller can be effective for getting mites off your clothing and skin.** Change the tape frequently. Even a strip of duct tape can be used to pull crawling mites off the skin. A small hand held cordless vacuum is often effective when mites are infesting clothes. Bounce fabric sheets act as a mite repellent and can be put in clothing and shoes worn during the day to reduce the amount of crawling and biting.

Bed linens that are 100% cotton, such as flannel sheets, can more easily become infested and are harder to clean than synthetic fabrics, such as polyester or even satin. The same goes for clothes worn to bed. Some people report having better luck with 'jump suits' or jogging outfits that are synthetic and are tightly woven; which makes it more difficult for mites to penetrate.

**Clothes which are contaminated should be kept in a heavy duty plastic trash bag containing mothballs.** (Use the chemical type with Paradichlorobenzene, not the 'old fashion' type mothballs.) Modern mothballs have a scent that does not linger in clothing, and the chemical is effective against mites and the eggs.

**You can also add a Hot Shot 'no-pest strip' (that contains Dichlorovos) to the bag. Clothes that are infested may need to be laundered after wearing only once. The same goes for bed linen that is heavily infested.**

**TIP: Invest in a good quality steam iron (with burst-of-steam button) for the daily ironing that needs to be done.**

**Frequent laundering of clothing and bed linens is important to keep mites under control.** Use the hottest water possible and add about a cup or two of ammonia to the wash. Bleach can be used with white materials and bed linens. It may be necessary to turn up the hot water tank to at least 130 degrees F in order to be effective. (This may not be an option in a household where toddlers can turn on faucets, as the water could be scalding.) Epsom salt or Borax can also be added to the water. Clothes dryer should be on the highest heat setting possible. Gas dryers tend to get hotter than electric ones. Place a couple of Bounce fabric sheets in the dryer and make sure clothes stay in for a long period of time. **Clothing should be steam ironed on the high heat setting before being worn.** Even socks and underclothes should be steam ironed. Clean clothes should be stored in containers with mothballs until they are ready to be worn.

#### **LAUNDRY TIPS:**

**Put in the laundry soap, ammonia and epsom salt with the water prior to putting in the clothing. (Bleach instead of ammonia for some items). Fill the washing machine only half full of water for the load being washed. (This produces a more concentrated wash). Let the machine agitate the load for a few minutes to saturate the soap and chemicals in with the wash load completely. Then shut off the machine and let it sit for about a half hour or more. Then turn the machine back on to complete the cycle. Although the water will have cooled off somewhat, it can still help kill the mites and eggs effectively this way; as most machines cycle from the hot water wash to the cold water rinse fairly quickly. Front loaders are less effective for cleaning using this method because they do not saturate the water as completely.**



Denorex, Sulfodene and a good loofah scrub pad should be in your arsenal in the war against bird mites. These are very effective skin care products.

## PET HYGIENE

Like in humans, mites prefer warm, moist areas; and will get in the ears, mouth, and even eyes. This will be especially true in pets, as mites will have a harder time penetrating the animal's skin. Some have reported good success with 'Thiabendazole' for their pets. It is a medicine to treat parasites that can be taken internally or applied topically; such as to the dog or cat's ears. It has to be prescribed by the Vet. 'Mitaban', which is used to treat mange mites on dogs, may be beneficial. The active ingredient is Amitraz, which is a very effective miticide. It can be applied as a dip to treat the coat. It has to be prescribed by the Vet. Some have also had success with 'Frontline' products for pets. For internal infestation, Ivermectin is no longer the drug of choice for pets with a bird mite infestation. A research study showed that the amount of the drug needed to effectively reduce the mite population of *D. Gallinae* was near the lethal limit for the host mammal. And a Vet will not usually prescribe the higher dosage required for a bird mite infestation.

**Lime-sulfur dip is a safe alternative for ridding parasites from the animal's fur, and can be obtained without a prescription for dogs and cats. An anti-parasitic animal shampoo called 'Rotenone', by Goodwinol, may be effective against bird mites. It is derived from the Derris and Cube Roots, and it is often used by Vets**

for the treatment of Demodectic mites, lice, and fleas. The shampoo is basically Sulfur, Rotenone, and Benzocaine. It is safe for use on dogs and cats. They also make an ointment that can be used to treat infested ears. Sulfodene, which is made for dogs but is beneficial to human sufferers as well, can be used to treat the animal's irritated skin as it contains sulfur and coal tar. The 'Preventic' tick collar for dogs contains Amitraz and may be beneficial also, and can be obtained without a prescription. As with humans, the environment has to be aggressively cleaned. Bedding should be washed and changed frequently.

## NATURAL REMEDIES

There are some natural non-toxic alternatives that may be beneficial; even if they just bring some short-term relief for irritated skin, or as a deterrent from the biting. Unfortunately, these would not be considered a means to completely eradicate mites. The list is not comprehensive, and as more remedies are recommended or as further research indicates, they will be added.

- **Limonene or d-Limonene (orange oil), extracted from citrus peel, is shown to be effective against external pests; including fleas, lice, mites, and ticks, and is virtually nontoxic to warm-blooded mammals. It is sold in concentrate or ready mixed spray bottle, often labeled as a cleaner/ degreaser. It can be sprayed on bedding, clothing, in bathrooms, etc.**
- **Some essential oils have anti-parasitic properties and have been shown to be very effective against mites; these include eucalyptus, cedarwood, peppermint, lavender, and lemongrass. Even burning incense in a room can limit mite activity; as it can disrupt their ability to communicate. A hot bath can be prepared with oils, or a spray bottle solution can be made for applying on the skin. There was a research study which confirmed that some plant essential oils were toxic to *D. Gallinae*, but only with direct contact.**
- **Cedar oil based products have reportedly been used successfully for eradicating bird mites in the home. It is applied with a ULV fogger, according to the Cedarcide website protocol.**



This natural-based mosquito repellent is effective as a mite repellent; bringing a few hours of relief from the crawling and biting. The active ingredient is 40% Lemon-Eucalyptus oil.

- **Neem oil has anti-parasitic properties. One study showed that mite traps with 20% Neem Oil reduced the bird mite population 95% versus the non-treated areas.**
- **Diatomaceous Earth (DE) is a non-toxic pesticide that kills insects by shredding their exoskeleton and drying them out. Some research has shown that D. Gallinae resists desiccation, possibly due to its small size. A newer product, called Ecomite, claims to be effective against mites. DE can be applied like the mite dusting powder; into the carpet, in wall spaces and other confined areas. Farmers sometimes liberally apply DE to clothing when working with chickens infested by mites.**
- **Boric acid powder (Borate) is virtually non-toxic to humans but lethal to small bugs. Often sold as a cockroach powder. It can be used as a mite dusting powder.**
- **Listerine mouthwash can be used on the skin to bring some relief from the itching, and it also acts as a repellent when spritzed on the skin using**

**a spray bottle.**

- **Mites do not like menthol, and putting some menthol crystals in an old sock and placing this under the bed sheets may help in keeping them away at night. Vicks 'VapoRub' contains menthol and camphor, and it can be applied to the skin at night.**
- **Bounce fabric sheets can be used as a mite repellent. Place some in clothing, shoes, etc.; anyplace where mites are bothersome. Orange oil cleaner sprayed on a Bounce sheet and then wiped on the skin, is effective for reducing the itching and biting.**
- **Epsom salt, which has a high sulfur content, can be effective against mites. A couple of cupfuls can be added to hot water when bathing. Epsom salt can also be used when doing laundry with hot water.**
- **Vinegar can be used to reduce the itching and skin irritation. A spray bottle of vinegar and salt water is also effective as a mite repellent.**
- **Dawn dishwashing soap diluted in a spray bottle has been effective for some, and it can be safely sprayed on many surfaces. The surfactants in Dawn apparently are effective at breaking down the mite's exoskeleton. Mites cannot build up an immunity to this type of treatment, as with pesticides.**
- **Windex with Ammonia-D is reportedly successful for killing bird mites. Precaution should be used when spraying this on certain surfaces.**
- **Aquaphor, a petroleum based product, can be liberally applied to the skin to repel mites while sleeping. Others find Sulfur 8, baby oil, or Vaseline equally effective.**

### Other useful tips

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### **SUMMARY:**

- **Remove the source of mites (if known)**
- **PCO consultation if possible**
- **Bug spray and mite dusting powder**

- **Daily vacuuming and cleaning**
- **Lint roller for clothing and skin**
- **Frequent bathing / showering**
- **Seal mattress, box spring and pillows with vinyl protectors**
- **Benadryl or sleep aid at night**
- **Infested items in sealed bags with mothballs**
- **Frequent laundering of clothing and bed linen**
- **Steam iron all clothing on high heat before wearing**
- **Patience, Prayer, and Perseverance...**

[top of page](#)

"The prayers sent to God are often answered in the kindness of strangers."



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- Home
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- Forum
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- Other Resources
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**"If someone would have told me a bird mite affliction could happen to a person, I would probably not have believed them. Except that it has happened to me and it is the worst torment a person can endure." T.**

## Bird Mite Infestation...

**Who**...people with a bird's nest near the home, apartment dwellers with nesting pigeons, people with pets or other animals which are infested, farmers who raise chickens, people who obtain used furniture, carpet, clothing, etc, that has been infested. This can also include guests of hotels, office workers et al., when the buildings are inhabited by nesting birds.

**What**...parasitic infestation from bird mites too small to be easily seen without magnification. Symptoms include pinprick bites, often intense itching with or without lesions, small reddened bumps, and a crawling sensation anywhere on the body; with increased activity at night. Some people label these "the creepy crawlies". The intense itching and irritation on the skin is due to the mite's saliva. When a large area is covered with bites it will resemble a rash in appearance, and it is often mistaken for scabies.

**Where**...bird mites more commonly infest bedrooms and bathrooms, but will quickly infest the whole house. Mites will infest carpeting, bedding, upholstered furniture, clothing, etc. They hide in cracks, crevices and darkened areas in the home when not active. They tend to congregate where humans routinely are; such as near the computer, in automobiles, etc.

**When**...bird mites are most active from dusk till dawn, but can be active at other times, especially when disturbed. Bird mites are very disruptive to our normal sleep pattern, causing many nights of lost sleep. They tend to be more active on damp, humid, overcast days and nights. Mites are less active during daylight hours, and they are less active on hot, dry,

sunny days. Increased activity every seven days or so, when the new mites will mature. Mite activity also tends to increase around a full moon. Bird mite populations tend to peak in the late spring and summer, corresponding to an increase in the bird population and an increase in temperature and humidity levels.

**Why**...bird mites are parasites they feed on living organisms; the female mite needs blood to reproduce. They are attracted to mammals by receptors for moisture, heat and CO<sub>2</sub>. They are aggressive and they often bite humans when their original food source has gone; as when the young birds leave the nest. They can quickly multiply into thousands, leaving the afflicted person with the feeling of being overwhelmed. Once a home is heavily infested, they are very difficult to fully eradicate.



Close-up image of a bird mite bite mark on a human leg, with the typical bulls eye characteristics. The outer band is typically about .25 inch across and the raised, reddened center is about .1 inch. Although similar in size to a mosquito bite, a mite bite typically takes much longer to heal.

**Birdmites.org fully supports the premise that parasitic bird mites can adapt and live in the human environment when the original avian host is no longer viable. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence to support this from those who have been afflicted for many years, long after the original source of infestation was identified and removed. And medical research has shown that parasitic acaroid mites can adapt and survive in a human environment. We encourage further research and understanding of bird mite acariasis and human parasitosis.**

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- Terminology

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- Strategies

- Forum

- Research

- Other Resources

- Diary

- Contact

"Who EXACTLY is supposed to help with this affliction? Entomologists study mites but don't treat humans and doctors don't seem to have a clue about how mites affect people!"  
S.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

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**Q: Why are these bird mites so hard to get rid of in the home?**

**A: A home invasion often involves several thousand mites when a bird's nest has been recently vacated. Mites are very small but very tenacious. These are parasites which have evolved over millions of years, and are very adaptable to a changing environment. Since they need a host mammal to survive, they will do whatever it takes to ensure future generations. One research article documents how *D. Gallinae* can actually revert to an earlier morphological state in order to not be rejected by the host mammal's immune system.**

**Q: Why are these mites so hard to see, I can feel them crawling and biting, but don't see them?**

**A: A mature bird mite is only about .5 mm or less, and the immature mite is even smaller. Many people state that they are not very easy to see without magnification.**

**Q: How can I tell which type of bird mite it is?**

**A: The only way to get a positive ID is to have an entomologist (acarologist) view them under a microscope. Short of that, there are a couple of differences that some may find helpful. If the mite is very tiny and whitish and occasionally seen as red, then it most likely is *D. Gallinae*. If seen as blackish, it would more likely be *O. Sylvarium*, *O. Bursa*, or *O. Bacoti*. This family of mites tend to be a bit larger and darker than *D. Gallinae*.**

**Q: Why am I the only one bothered by them in our home?**

**A: It is not well understood how these mites select a host, but they are very tenacious and often content with parasitizing one individual in the home. This could possibly be due to the pheromones they use to communicate with others, as**

they tend to swarm the host mammal and crawl or bite in large numbers.

**Q: I don't get many bites, just a lot of crawling on the skin and around my mouth and nose, especially at night. Is this typical?**

**A: Many report that the mites crawling on the skin at night is the worst aspect to this affliction. The immature mite does NOT need blood, and so will not bite readily. It is thought that the slow crawling on the skin is due to the immature mites. This is also why they are so difficult to see without magnification. Once the mites are invading the mouth, ears, etc., they could very well be getting their blood meal internally and there would be no need for them to penetrate the skin in order to feed. Consequently, very few bites.**

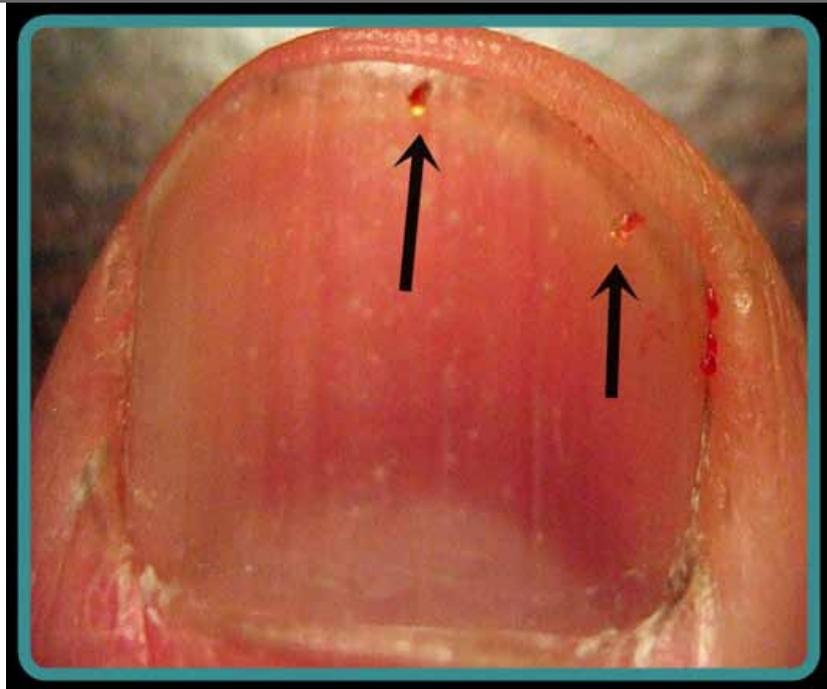
**Excerpt from a Michigan State University "Pest Management Manual", Chapter 3: Mites and Tick... "Some mites have evolved to become important ectoparasitic pests of animals. Some species of mites have even become endoparasites, invading the ears, bronchi and lungs, nose and other tissues of animals."**

**Q: Will others I come in contact with be bothered by these mites?**

**A: There are some who have reported others where eventually infested by being in contact with the infested person. The level of intimacy among people may also be a determining factor. However, there is no way of knowing who will or won't have problems from these mites. What is predictable is that if the infestation in the home cannot effectively be dealt with, bird mites will eventually infest the automobile, work environment and other places where people spend much of their time.**

**Q: What are some of the symptoms of an internal mite problem?**

**A: Some with a prolonged bird mite infestation in the home eventually have problems with the mites becoming internal for at least part of their life cycle. Some symptoms include: a productive cough with white phlegm in the morning, itching ears and eyes, sneezing and coughing when the mites are in the nose/mouth, and men may wake up with painful erections in the night when the mites are in the urethra. Long-term effects include joint aches, mental fatigue, lose of weight, and other symptoms both subtle and obvious. Some symptoms may be directly related to the mites and their toxins and other symptoms may be related to dealing with stress for a long time; which can affect the person's immune system.**



Close up photo of blood engorged mites extracted from a human ear. Likely *D. Gallinae*, as they are normally opaque and very small but become crimson red and easier to see after feeding on a blood meal.

**Q: Which chemicals (miticides) seem to work the best?**

**A: We know what does not work; and this includes Pyrethrin and Permethrin, and many of the other 'thrins', especially at the low level of active ingredient in most over-the-counter bug sprays. Bayer's Beta-Cyfluthrin is one of the more effective chemicals available. Using a variety of chemicals is often more effective than relying on one specific chemical for a long period of time. For home fumigation, some have had success with Vikane gas, when used at a 10x concentration. But others have stated this was not effective, either from a low level of chemicals used by the PCO, or possibly due to application errors. Non-toxic cedar oil products have also been used successfully by some with a bird mite infestation.**

**Q: Why don't we see them on the glue boards that the PCO placed in the home?**

**A: Bird mites are very small and normally opaque and so these will not be readily seen on glue boards. And mites would normally not be attracted to glue boards. They tend to hide during the day and congregate near the host mammal at night. You may have better luck using a hot pan of water in a darkened room, as detailed on the 'strategies' webpage.**

**Q: Will changing my diet, or taking supplements help with this?**

**A: The short answer is probably not. We do know that mite populations tend to be higher on mammals with a weakened immune system, so it can be helpful to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle. But there are no reports of 'cures' just from**

taking garlic, or other herbs, etc. Although some have reported a decrease in symptoms with these and other sulfur products. Also, some have noted that parasites tend to thrive in a high carb/sugar environment, and cutting back on these processed foods may help some. The intestinal cleanses that claim to help, are meant for those with intestinal (GI) parasites. Bird and rodent mites do not strictly live in that environment and these cleanses would probably be of little benefit.

**Q: Why aren't doctors and dermatologists more aware of this affliction?**

**A: Unfortunately, 'ectoparasites' are not part of their education and training. Except for the scabies mite, very little is known by the medical profession regarding skin parasites and human parasitosis. It is a specialist, called a 'parasitologist', who best understands the interaction of mites and mammals. And they normally study them in relation to animals not humans. Researchers who do study human parasitosis are few and far between.**

SYMPTOMS (0-10 scale) Disagree-fully agrees with symptoms	SCABIES MITE	BIRD MITE
Crawling sensation on skin	0	9-10
Itching intensity	8-10	2-8
Effectiveness of scabicides (Elimite, Kwell, Lindane, etc)	8-10	0-1
Ability to eradicate in environment	8-10	0-4
Infestation of scalp, nose, ears, etc.	0-1	8
Contagious to others	9-10	0-5
Visible to naked eye	0	1-3

**Q: Isn't there something more that can be done?**

**A: Many of us have been asking this question for a long time. There are many things that can be done on a daily basis, as listed on the 'strategies' webpage, but there are no simple answers. It is just a lot of hard work!!! As we gain a better knowledge and understanding of parasites and their behavior, then we can find more effective treatment options. And as we find things that are successful and then share this knowledge with others, the easier this will be for all of us who deal with this.**

**Q: Is this just a recent phenomenon, or have bird and rodent mites plagued humans for a long time?**

**A: There is not a lot of older medical literature regarding mites affecting humans, except for the scabies mite. However, some who had symptoms of unidentifiable rashes and itching may have been dealing with a mite affliction. For example,**

**people with poor hygiene were often labeled as having 'cooties', as they would often itch and have rashes from unidentified bug bites, and this could very well have been from mites. The symptoms often were attributed to fleas, lice, etc.; and there is no way of knowing if some of these were actually mites, either bird mites or rodent mites. As our research and knowledge improves, so will our understanding of human parasitosis.**

"The prayers sent to God are often answered in the kindness of strangers."



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- Home

- **\*\*FAQ\*\***

- **Mighty Mite**

- Bird Mite Nightmare!

- A House Infested...

- Mental Anguish

- Strategies

- Forum

- Research

- Other Resources

- Diary

- Contact

---

## Bird Mite Characteristics

The term 'bird mite' will be used generically unless a specific species is named. There are also other types of nuisance mites which will bite humans and produce many similar skin problems. These include the rodent mite, straw itch mite, cheyletiella mite, et al; but this website does not specifically address these other species. Although some of the 'strategies' mentioned can be effective against them also.

**"I would not wish this hell on my worst enemy." B.**

### Introduction

**Bird mites (avian mites) are parasitic arthropods in the acari (tick/spider) family. There are reportedly 45,000 species of mites that are known. Only a few species of acaroid mites are parasites on mammals; but they can be very detrimental to the host, with symptoms ranging from mild discomfort to loss of health and even death. Research has shown that parasitic mites have evolved and adapted very well to a changing environment, and many are no longer host specific; and they have become problematic for many different mammals, including humans.**

**There are two main species of bird mites commonly found in North America. These are *Demanyssus Gallinae* (D. Gallinae) and**

**Ornithonyssus Sylviarum** (northern fowl mite or NFM). There are also other bird mite species found mainly in other regions of the world that are very similar, such as **Ornithonyssus Bursa** (tropical fowl mite). Most researchers contend that there could very well be other parasitic bird mite species still unclassified.

Of the two most common species, *D. Gallinae* is by far the more difficult to eradicate. It is smaller, can live much longer without a blood meal, and is more resistant to miticide chemicals than the NFM.

The bird mite life cycle consists of: egg, larva, nymph, and mature adult. They can complete this cycle in about 7 days, depending on the environment. The mature mite has four pair of legs, and the immature nymph has three pair of legs. Bird mites have a sharp, protruding mouthpiece, which allows them to penetrate skin in order to obtain blood from the host mammal. The adult female needs blood in order to reproduce. The female mite typically is about 95% of the population. They are generally opaque/whitish but will be darker after a blood meal.



Image of mature NFM (*O. Sylviarum*), approximately .5 mm in length, X63 magnification. (photo courtesy Tokai J Exp Clin Med., Vol. 23, 1998)

Although parasitic bird mites need a host mammal to survive and reproduce, research has shown they can survive for extended periods

without a host. **One Swedish study reported *D. Gallinae* can live nine months without a host.** Several other studies confirm that they live at least eight months without feeding. NFM can live several weeks without a host.

Bird mites are very small; a mature NFM is no more than about .5 mm in length, and *D. Gallinae* is typically no more than about .4 mm in length. A mature bird mite would be about the size of the period at the end of this sentence. Fully a third of this length comprises the front legs and mouthpiece, and so the actual body size is smaller than the total length. An unfed mature mite may or may not be seen with the naked eye. The NFM tends to be slightly darker and more easy to see than *D. Gallinae*. The immature nymph is much smaller than an adult mite and will not usually be seen except with strong magnification.



Magnified image of a mature *D. Gallinae* (*Demanyssus Gallinae*). Approximately .4 mm in length. (Photo courtesy parasite.tmu.edu.)

***D. Gallinae* has been called a 'chicken mite', or 'red mite of chicken', as they were first identified on chickens. Normally opaque until feeding, they then become crimson red. They are most active at night and will hide during the day away from the host. They can so badly infest a chicken coop that some of the young may not survive. Chickens infested with bird mites have been shown to produce poorer quality eggs and fewer chicks. Farmers may have to resort to burning**

**badly infested coops when the mite population cannot be controlled. This species, along with the NFM, are also known to infest sparrows, pigeons, starlings, and other varieties of wild birds and rodents in North America.**

**The NFM tends to spend most of it's life cycle on or near the host. A population can grow into the thousands very quickly. NFM is not only found on wild birds, but has been known to infest rodents, such as the Norway rat, common field mouse, and even pet gerbils; which means they can easily gain access to the home environment without a host bird ever being present. Both species of bird mites have been documented as being problematic for domesticated pets as well as humans.**



**Magnified image of a mature bird mite indigenous to South America, possibly *O. Bursa*. This mite was obtained from a home in Brazil. (photo courtesy Dr. Wambier, Dermatologist, 2008)**

## **Environmental Characteristics**

**Bird mites normally hide or burrow during the day and are more**

active at night, corresponding to their inherent behavior to parasitize nesting birds. **Humans bothered by bird mites will notice significantly more activity at night than in the daytime.** In the home, bedding material and furniture are an ideal breeding ground for mites that will bite during the night and hide and reproduce deep inside when not active. Mites prefer cottons and fabrics as this can act like an insulating material where eggs can be protected from the environment.

A bird mite infestation in the home is often initially thought of as a flea infestation. People with pets will assume that if the parasite is this small it must be fleas. Bird mites are even smaller and do not hop the way fleas can.

### Not Fleas!!!

Bird mites are able to find an appropriate host by means of their special receptors for moisture, heat and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). This is why people often notice them crawling near their mouth, nose, ears, eyes and groin area; especially at night. It is well documented that bird mites will parasitize the respiratory system, as well as skin and feathers of host birds. Mite thermal receptors are so sensitive that they can detect a difference of only 1 degree F in the environment. The female mite is typically 95% of the population, and they secrete a pheromone to communicate with others, which is why they can so quickly swarm the host mammal. And this can explain why they often bite in large numbers and can so quickly multiply once they have a host.

**"Red poultry mites (*D. Gallinae*) are a direct threat to economically valuable birds, suspected of passing on diseases like Newcastle Disease. But they have also been shown to be part of a wider chain transmitting diseases to people and other animals such as the food poisoning bacteria *Salmonella*, and equine encephalitis in horses." *Society for General Microbiology, September 9, 2007, "Bacteria Inside Red***

## ***Mites Could Be Targeted To Control Poultry Pests".***

Parasitic mites have evolved a very efficient systems for detecting a host mammal. As mentioned earlier, they have **`chemoreceptors'** which allow them to detect CO2 and other scents from the host mammal, as well as pheromones which allows them to communicate with each other for swarming, mating, etc. The also have **`mechanoreceptors'** which allows them to detect movement and vibration from the host mammal. And they also have **`thermoreceptors'** for detecting warmth/heat and a change of temperature in the environment when a host mammal is present.

The mature adult is surprisingly quick, mainly due to the large front legs. The immature nymph moves slower due to its smaller size and one less pair of legs. It is likely that the slow crawling that is often felt on the skin of humans is due to the immature mite. Bird mite activity tends to be inversely related to the host mammals; if the host is active then mites are usually less aggressive, conversely when the host is sedentary mite activity tends to increase. Humans and pets bothered by mites will notice significantly more mite activity while resting. (A ceiling fan or an oscillating fan can be used to try and keep mite activity to a minimum in a room.)



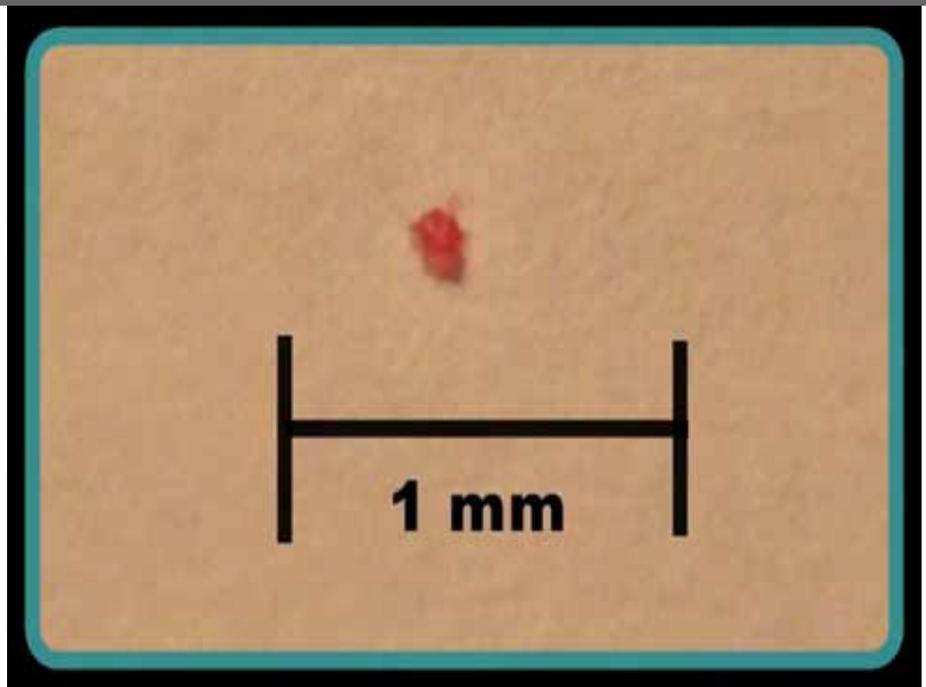
**Multiple reddened lesions on a human leg attributed to a home infestation of bird mites, later identified as *D. Gallinae*. These mites tend to swarm and often bite in large numbers. Photo submitted by one of our readers.**

**Bird mites are very hearty and adaptable to most any environment. Their fluctuating metabolism allows them to survive in cold weather and live for extended periods when no host is available.**

**Entomologists call this 'diapause'. They simply shut down their metabolism until the temperature is more appropriate. *D. Gallinae* can survive in temperature extremes of below freezing, to over 125 degrees F. (One study reports they survive to -4 degrees F.) There is also a fairly wide temperature and humidity range when mites will be active to parasitize and reproduce, and it is often dictated by how long it has been since they have fed. They are tenacious, and once they have identified a host, they are able to quickly adapt and remain in that environment indefinitely. Left unchecked, their population can soon grow into the thousands!**

**Both *D. Gallinae* and the NFM are documented in numerous research journals as being a nuisance pest on many species of birds and various mammals, including humans. It has become quite clear that bird mites are no longer host specific, and have adapted very well to a changing environment (as mites tend to do).**

**Avian mites have demonstrated a highly flexible DNA, which allows them to quickly adapt to unfavorable conditions with each new generation. There are documented cases of certain insecticides no longer being effective in eradicating them as they once did. Research has shown that some bird mites have the ability to revert to an earlier stage to avoid being rejected by the host's immune system. A recent Michigan State University 'Pest Management Manual' states that several species of mite 'ectoparasites' are shown to have evolved into 'endoparasites' in the host mammals...making detection and eradication even more difficult.**



Close up photo of a blood-engorged bird mite, most likely *D. Gallinae*. Normally opaque and very small; they are very difficult to see until after taking a blood meal.

**Bird mite activity tends to increase in a warm and humid environment.** Mites are most productive when the relative humidity is between 70%-90%. People that live in humid climates, such as Florida and California, report many more problems from bird mite infestation than those in arid climates, such as Arizona. If high humidity is an issue, then air-conditioning and dehumidifiers should be considered to reduce mite activity.

The intense itching and irritation is due to the saliva mites secrete when attached to the skin, and it may last for days after the mite is no longer attached; even when the skin does not show any visible signs.

**Bird mites are known vectors of various pathogens in birds, livestock and humans. They can transmit disease causing organisms to the host, such as the virus of St Louis Encephalitis. The reports of human disease attributed to bird mites are rare, but they do occur. There have been reports by some people of strange fibers on the skin and Morgellons symptoms that started after a mite infestation, but the link is vague and requires further research. Some with a long term mite infestation will test positive for Lyme disease. It is hoped that at**

**some point the CDC or NIH would take a closer look at human parasitosis and acariasis attributed to mite infestation.**

**Bird mite infestation of humans occur throughout the world, from Australia to England and throughout the USA. The species of mite may vary, but the symptoms are generally the same. Mites are no respecter of persons; whether young or old, male or female, vegetarian or carnivorous, and if in good health or not. Although, it is important to maintain a healthy immune system, as research has shown that mite populations tend to be higher in mammals with poorer health.**



**Mature bird mite image submitted by one of our readers. This sample was obtained by clear tape from the individual's skin, and examined under a microscope, where the digital image was captured.**

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• Home

• **\*\*FAQ\*\***

• Mighty Mite

• **Bird Mite Nightmare!**

○ **A Family Nightmare!**

• A House Infested...

• Mental Anguish

• Strategies

• Forum

• Research

• Other Resources

• Diary

• Contact

---

## A Bird Mite Nightmare...One Person's Story

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**My nightmare started four years ago when I removed a sparrow's nest from my garage after the young birds had vacated the premises. A few days later, I started to get these bites all over my back and legs, and some on my arms and face. I would first notice them when I woke up in the morning. My bedroom was only about 10 feet from the garage and I slept with the windows open, since it was summer in northern Ohio and I didn't have AC. At the time I had no clue what happened.**

**I soon realized that I had some type of bug infestation, and assumed it must be fleas but I don't have a pet and am very good about vacuuming, etc. I sprayed the heck out of the place with bug spray for fleas, vacuumed and cleaned everything, but it did not help. After about a month of torment and not sleeping much at night, I realized it wasn't fleas.**

**I then thought it was the 'no-see-ums' (biting midges), but I**

**don't live near water and these things bothering me don't fly but crawl and are worse at night. Nevertheless, I bought fine-mesh window screening, and rescreened the whole house, thinking if it was midges, this would keep them out. No luck here, whatever it was, it was already throughout the house, in the carpeting, bedding, etc.**

**I thought it could be bedbugs but these are too small, and bedbugs don't get in your nose and mouth the way these things do. I never saw any of the telltale debris from bedbugs either. I vacuumed, washed and disinfected everything, but still no luck. I could blow my nose and see tiny dots of red blood and the itching and crawling was totally unbearable at times. It was exasperating not knowing exactly what the heck this was. It was the worst thing I had ever experienced in my life.**

**Thanks to the posts on some websites, I finally figured out after many months that I had some type of bird mite, and have communicated with others who have been dealing with this same dilemma. And it made sense, seeing this nightmare started after removing a bird's nest. And they were so small, which eliminated many other bugs.**

**After that, I tried many things in order to keep them off of me. I took hot baths with all kinds of different salts and essential oils. Epsom salt scrub does seem to help some. I tried changing my diet thinking it would help. I even started smoking cigars to help keep them out of my mouth and sinus, and it does help some!**

**I used every bug spray out there, some helped a little but most didn't. I even bought a ULV fogger/sprayer that professional pest control operators use, and bought some really strong chemicals, and had to wear a respirator to spray them. The bug spraying got so bad that it would choke me to where I could hardly breathe and it would burn my eyes. I would often have**

to go to a hotel just to get a few hours sleep and to breath fresh air again. The 100% DEET I put on my skin would often burn and would only work for a few hours at best. The mites ended up in the car, at work, and any place where I would be for any length of time. Since they so easily can hide anywhere, nothing got rid of them sufficiently, and I had to move out of that house.

One of the frustrating aspects of this nightmare is the lack of knowledge by so called experts. Many entomology websites will say that these mites only live on host birds. After four years of hell, I can assure you that they do in fact live on human blood. If no bird is around, blood from another mammal is just as good. I am using the term 'bird mite' in a generic way, since there are several different type that are host on birds and I am not sure which one I am dealing with, although I suspect it is *D. Gallinae*, because of how long they live without a host.

The dermatologist I went to was of no help, and in fact, he must have thought I was delusional when I mentioned the crawling bugs. He gave me some Zyprexa, 'to help me sleep at night'. As a college grad in health care, I knew this was an anti-psychotic medicine. Since when do derms feel they are qualified to make a psych diagnosis? In spite of all the bites and dermatitis on my back, he just sort of dismissed them. Do yourself a favor, and don't waste your time with them, they can't really help with an infestation. Only give something temporary for the itch and rash.

Early on, I had most of my furniture hauled away to the trash. Almost all the rest of my stuff was put in storage. I have long since moved out of that house, and yet I still have to deal with this crap everyday. Fighting them has been an ongoing battle. Once, I even bought a parakeet to see if maybe they would switch host and not bother me any more. I put glue strips around the birdcage to try to get rid of them. Well, the poor bird was tormented too and so was I still. It would aggressively peck at itself and flap its wings for long periods, more so at

**night. So I had to get rid of the bird.**

**After about a year of this, I finally realized these aren't just skin parasites, content to bite and crawl on the host. They seemed to be in my mouth and sinus cavity, and other places as much as being on my skin. Many days I wake up gagging and coughing up white phlegm. And the same white color snot from my nose (sorry so gross sounding). Sometimes I wake up with painful erections from them biting me. Maybe the mature female sometimes places the eggs in the host mammal to incubate and to assure that they will survive? Who knows? And I suspect the slow crawling on the skin is due to the immature mites, which have one less pair of legs.**

**Since they seemed to be thriving in me, I tried oral Ivermectin (Stromectol) a few times, and also Vermox medications for parasites. Nothing seems to really knock them out. Once they have a host, they are very tenacious. The sulfa drugs have helped some people, but I am allergic to them.**

**Since these mites were most active late at night, I wasn't getting a lot of deep restful sleep. After a few month of this it really took its toll, and life bacame very discouraging, and then depression became a big factor; mainly from a lack of sleep and inability to eradicate them. After about a year of torment I became suicidal as I just didn't want to deal with this anymore, as it was affecting almost every area of my life. I didn't want to be around others for any length of time for fear of contaminating them somehow. I would notice when around some people, they would start to scratch, rub their nose, or start sneezing. Also, this is something you just can't talk about with others very easily; they will either think you are crazy since they have never heard of it or else they will want to avoid you so they don't end up with this problem also.**

**Before this all started, I was a very healthy middle-aged man**

**who enjoyed biking, hiking and sports. Not anymore! This past year I have noticed a lot more joint aches and pain (arthralgia) and found out I am hypothyroid. My body temperature is typically around 97.5 F. The stress from this is starting to take it's toll on me. I do find that MSM does decrease the arthralgia, I take about 1000 mg daily.**

**It has been a struggle, with all the cleaning, vacuuming, laundry, and bug spraying I have to do daily. Over time, I have learned to manage it a lot better, and know what to expect and what has to be done every day just to live a halfway normal life.**

**T.**

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- Home

- **\*\*FAQ\*\***

- Mighty Mite

- Bird Mite Nightmare!

- A House Infested...

- **Not Fleas!!**

- Mental Anguish

- Strategies

- Forum

- Research

- Other Resources

- Diary

- Contact

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## **A House Infested...And Some Solutions**

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**I have been researching this issue since 2000, when we bought a house that backs up to open space. We have been under attack ever since. When I say we, it is primarily me (adult female) and my dogs (all female) who seem to be under siege. It appears that mites are drawn more readily to females, but some men are just as attractive to them. We have had both birds roosting and roof rats nesting. Our house had a tile roof that afforded easy access to the eaves. We went through the usual rounds of doctor visits, permethrin treatments, veterinary university visits, with limited success.**

**Here is what I've learned: The most effective massive killing process to clear a house of bird or rat mites is to have the dwelling tented and fumigated by gas. This kills everything inside the home and on the exterior walls. It will kill everything that is hiding in an air pocket inside the house and**

**it solves the problem of trying to reach all the places mites hide. It is a very expensive process and cost prohibitive for a lot of people with fumigation for a small, one story house starting at \$3,000.00. Bird mites are long lived, and extremely difficult to get rid of. Fumigation I'm told is the silver bullet.**

**If fumigation is not an option, mix 20 mule team borax (available at most supermarkets in the laundry detergent section) with wax and wax your hardwood floors. If you have tile floors, mix it with the wash water and a mild dish detergent every time you mop the floor. Mix the borax with water and spray walls and wash the walls down. Sprinkle carpets with borax and then vacuum the carpet. Using plastic mattress covers is a good idea, but don't overlook pillows. If you're sure you're battling bird mites don't use down pillows or comforters; switch to acrylic and wash them often.**

**You can obtain diatomaceous earth formulated specifically as an insecticide at garden supply stores. Sprinkle this around the outside perimeter of the home (the last line of defense). (When handling Diatomaceous Earth, use a mask as it can be extremely irritating to the lungs). It is not recommended that you use Diatomaceous Earth inside the home. It can become airborne very easily via normal household movement. Diatomaceous earth shreds crawling insect and ectoparasite skeletal structure.**

**Animals should be treated with a spot-on preventative like Revolution. Revolution has a derivative of Ivermectin called selamectin, and as it is a Heart Worm Preventative it is available only by prescription from a Veterinarian. Animals should be treated at the same time all the other cleaning is being done to prevent ongoing infestation.**

**As far as treating the humans in the home: Take lots of baths. Use epsom salts and bath oil. Pamper your skin, and drown the bugs. Do not apply bleach to the skin or bathe in it. The skin**

**has natural bacteria that protects the body, and treating the skin with bleach will kill the bacteria and expose the body to invasive bacteria and yeasts. Another bad idea is to apply animal pharmaceuticals to human skin. Don't use pet spot ons or permethrin shampoos on the human body. Those products have been formulated in doses that are specific to animals, and absorption of those products into the human body, could be highly toxic.**

**Repellants that are effective are skin products specifically formulated for humans that contain a small amount of tea tree oil. Neem oil is a repellent and some people reported getting relief by upping the amount of garlic they consumed in their diet.**

**A lot of people who battle bird and rodent mites suffer from candida, toe-nail fungus and other opportunistic health issues because of imbalances caused by overzealous skin treatment. Toenail fungus may be cured with the application of Tea Tree Oil applied directly to the nail. Candida will require a special diet. Other yeasts and Fungus should be diagnosed and treated by a physician.**

**Prevention is key in reducing a bird mite population. Buy large plastic owls at the hardware store and position them in prominent locations around the property where birds will see them. Another good deterrent is a plastic snake. They used to sell plastic snakes at toys-r-us. Position these at various spots around the exterior roof of the house to discourage birds from coming near. Chimneys should have a screen guard to discourage roosting. If you see a bird start to build a nest, tear it down immediately. Don't feel bad, they'll build another one in a tree somewhere. You have to be vigilant to prevent birds from roosting if you don't have owl or snake warning signs posted.**

**We've radically reduced the mite population in our home by replacing the tile roof, replacing all the carpet in our home with tile and hard wood, making sure all holes in the eaves are patched. We have large owls positioned on all four corners of the house. All my surfaces are periodically refreshed with Borax. The dogs, after a course of revolution are now itch free but the minute they do get an itch, I bathe them in a bath of epsom salts and bath oil, just like us people. It does wonders for their coats. (Itching in the ears can be addressed by coating the inside of the ear with mineral oil, it will smother the mites). The cats, I spray with a mixture of water and olive oil. They don't like it much, but they used to have dandruff and scratch, and now there is no dandruff and their coats look wonderful. The cats are now confined indoors so that they can't bring home birds and rodents that will transmit both parasites and disease.**

**This fight isn't easy and it's not cheap, and it can often be fought in a non-toxic way. It won't go away overnight, but be patient. It will go away or at the least be bearable, if you are diligent.**

**M.**

"The prayers sent to God are often answered in the kindness of strangers."



**"Dedicated to finding effective solutions for bird mite infestations of humans and their environment, encouraging those afflicted, facilitating research and a better understanding of human parasitosis."**

- Home
- **\*\*FAQ\*\***
- Mighty Mite
- Bird Mite Nightmare!
- A House Infested...
- **Mental Anguish**
- Strategies
- Forum
- Research
- Other Resources
- Diary
- Contact

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## Mental Anguish

If you have been dealing with a parasite infestation for any length of time, you quickly come to realize that the 'mental anguish' is as hard, or even harder than the physical torment. The relentless biting, itching, crawling sensation and lack of sleep are the physical symptoms that can propagate a whole host of secondary issues. For those having to deal with a parasite infestation, it is important to acknowledge this as part of the battle each day.

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**"You are sure right about the mental anguish this causes. I agree that it is tough to pretend like there isn't anything wrong when I am itching and scratching like crazy. I don't know how I can "win" this war if I keep the mites to a minimum at home but they are all over the work site area...There are days when it is all I can do not to break down and cry at work. (I do at home with no problem!) So many people do not understand and especially the doctors who should be there to help us...It gets to be discouraging." D.**

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**A bird mite infestation can significantly affect a person's quality of life. It is hard to maintain a constant struggle against these unseen predators day and night and still work full time, take care of family obligations, and do all the other mundane things in life that are often taken for granted. After a while it may become almost impossible to maintain a normal lifestyle, and it can take its toll on the person and family relationships.**

### 3D PERSPECTIVE OF A BIRD MITE INFESTATION

Disappointment - in the medical profession and with others who cannot provide adequate answers

Discouragement - from a lack of success and not winning this war quickly

Depression - when one begins to lose hope

**The financial burden can be a significant source of mental stress.** It is very expensive to fumigate a home and to sleep in hotel rooms for many nights. And even if this is not done, some have had to discard furniture, carpeting, clothing, etc. Many have ended up moving when the mites could not be effectively eradicated from the home. Going to a doctor and buying medications is not cheap, as well as constantly buying different chemicals and cleaning products on an ongoing basis. Also, taking time off from work can be a financial and mental burden.

**Social isolation is a real concern with a mite infestation.** Since this problem is not common, others may not understand what you are dealing with. Those who have never gone through this, or even heard of it, have no idea how seriously it affects a person's life. It makes it all but impossible to tell friends and coworkers what you are going through. This lack of a support system can make the depression worse. And a person does not want to feel like they are somehow contaminating others, and so may limit their social contacts. It is not well understood how these parasites choose a host. Some people in close contact may be bothered by them, and others may not be.

**Bird mites are most active at night and the lack of quality sleep over a prolonged period can often lead to depression.** This fact is well documented in medical journals. REM sleep is the deepest and most restful sleep we can get, and this occurs late at night, and that is the time when bird mites are most active. It is important to get adequate sleep; even if it means going to a hotel room occasionally.

The lack of sleep is one of the most devastating aspects of a bird mite infestation. Benadryl, an anti-histamine, can be helpful on nights when sleep is illusive. Benadryl also helps reduce the reaction from the bites.

**A person can grow weary from fighting these battles everyday.** It can often feel like a relentless enemy is stalking the afflicted individual. Sometimes it is the intense itching or rash on large areas of the body, which can last for days on end. Other times it will be the crawling and biting that causes most of the battles.

**It can often seem like an emotional roller coaster.** Some days it may seem like the situation is finally under control, and then other days (and nights) it can seem overwhelming, like there has not been any progress. And discouragement is often the end result.

**When it seems like there are no answers for this relentless affliction, a person can get very discouraged.** Discouragement and depression can lead to suicidal

thoughts, when it seems like the only way out from this living hell. It is hard to go through something this difficult for a long period without losing hope. There are some who have attempted suicide due to a long-standing parasite infestation. An anti-depressant may be needed for a period of time if the person and their doctor feel it may help.

**In some cases, the person is told by the doctor they have scabies.** They inevitably are unable to get rid of this problem with scabies treatment, which leads to further frustration and unanswered questions. Some people have done numerous scabies treatments and have inflicted serious damage to their skin.

Elimite, a 5% Permethrin cream frequently prescribed for scabies, is not effective against bird mites. The scabies mite is smaller and more fragile than bird mites, and people with a bird mite infestation have not had much success with this product.

**Not being taken serious by medical professionals can make this dilemma very frustrating.** Most people have no reason to confabulate symptoms of parasitosis, and should not be labeled as delusional by doctors who are not familiar with parasite infestations. Most all bird mite sufferers can state when the problem first occurred, and have been able to identify the source. One study by the Oklahoma State Dept of Health and the NPA verified that many of those with a sensation of biting and crawling on the skin and labeled as 'delusional', did indeed have very small parasites on their skin. But this could only be verified under high magnification by someone knowledgeable in parasites. This cannot be verified with just a casual glance in a doctor's office.

**The inability to quickly eradicate these mites, as well as the lack of good information by the medical community, can make one question their sanity at times.** It is at these forums where you come to realize that others are going through very similar situations. The only label that may be somewhat accurate with a parasite infestation, is the somewhat obsessive-compulsive behavior required to daily clean, vacuum, spray for mites, etc.

**Finding a way to cope is vital when dealing with this affliction.** Laughter and prayer are often our most effective coping mechanisms, and both are difficult to do with a parasite infestation. It can really affect a person's faith and what they believe in, as unanswered prayers can make it hard to believe that anything good will ever come from this. People who have been through this and have come out the other end are better able to sympathize and encourage others who have to deal with this kind of adversity, so that is a good thing. And when we are able to share our experiences and effective solutions with each other, the better off we all are!

## A PRAYER

**Dear Lord,**

**I know that sometime, somewhere, some type of Gethsemane awaits me. Just as it did you. I know that someday a dark night will fall upon my soul. Just as it did yours. But I shudder to think about it, about the darkness and the aloneness and the despair.**

**Someday I know I will wrestle with circumstances that are beyond my control, that some sort of suffering will pin me to the cold, hard ground.**

**Help me when it is dark and I am alone and afraid. Help me to put my trembling hand in yours and trust you with my life. And with the lives of those I love.**

**(Ken Gire, excerpt from "Moments With The Savior")**



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• Home

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• A House Infested...

• Mental Anguish

• Strategies

• **Forum**

• Research

• Other Resources

• Diary

• Contact

## Forum...Your Story To Share

Share your bird mite story and solutions with others...

[forum@birdmites.org](mailto:forum@birdmites.org)

Please allow at least 24 hours for story to post. All posts are subject to editing and approval and must be of appropriate content for this forum. (Posts are chronological starting with the most recent.)

**Please note that the strategies mentioned on the forum may not always be safe or effective, and are not necessarily endorsed by birdmites.org. It is often out of frustration, and the lack of answers by the medical community, that people will resort to unorthodox or unproven remedies for this affliction. However, it is felt that we are best served when we can share our experiences and solutions with each other.**



[Join the birdmitesorg discussion group!](#)

Word search: F3  
To find a specific word or phrase

Please feel free to join the Yahoo 'birdmitesorg' discussion group! You can ask questions of others, and also provide treatment strategies and updated information that you wish to share with others. There are also more files, links and resources listed there. Some of the recent posts which are too long for this forum are listed there in the 'files' folder.

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### **MENTHOL CYRSTALS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

**I bought a pound of pure menthol crystals and am putting them in wax tart burners. They melt and vaporize the entire room (very strong!). I close the rooms off as I do them and let them go for the length of the burn time on the tea light. It seems to be making a BIG difference in crawling and biting. I don't know if it's simply repelling them or killing them. I think I read somewhere that strong menthol dries them out and desiccates them. The nice thing about the strong menthol vapor - it gets into EVERYTHING. I am praying that it is killing them. I bought the pound of crystals on ebay for about \$30. I was getting bitten badly and immediately every time I sat down at the computer, and they aren't bothering me at all right now. If nobody on the site has thought of using the menthol crystals in this manner, I highly recommend it. The beekeepers make screened packets of them and put in the hives on hot days to get the vapors. But if you melt those babies in a wax tart burner, you've got the strongest vapor possible and it gets into everything. If menthol truly does kill them, I can't see how this wouldn't substantially reduce their numbers. J.**

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### **ROACH PRUFE AND SERRANO PEPPERS HELPED**

**I had an infestation of bird mites that swarmed over me for about two days before I began to develop welts. I quickly discovered that the mites were swarming over all my furniture, and I couldn't even get them off my body, since they are so small and fast-moving. The first thing I did was to clean my apartment top to bottom using a strong tea solution made from boiling stick cinnamon, mixed with a little eucalyptus oil. I wiped down the floor, countertops, shelves and every other hard surface with the mixture, then sprayed it liberally on my mattress and every other upholstered surface. Next I spread liberal amounts of Roach Prufe beneath my bed and other furniture and beneath my rugs. Roach Prufe is an amazing, non-toxic product. The active ingredient is boric acid, but I've been told the inactive ingredients contain a sulfite that will eat through the exoskeleton of any bug that crawls through it. In any case I've never known a normal**

**boric acid powder work like Roach Prufe. Several times I sealed my apartment and left for a few hours while I fumigated it with smoke from Copal resin. Whether this really had any effect on the mites beyond the Roach Prufe, I can't say, but it made me feel that my apartment had been ritually cleansed.**

**I also had to stop the irritation they were causing, as they continued to feed on me. I started to ingest very large amounts of capsaicin by swallowing chopped Serrano peppers (as much as my stomach would stand). This led to much sweating and diarrhea, but I felt that these symptoms were beneficial for fighting off the infection. The capsaicin coming through my pores caused a pleasant burning sensation that countered the irritation caused by the bird mites. I painted each wound with a solution of benzalkonium chloride to keep the mites from feeding off them, and used spirits of camphor to relieve the itching, especially around my groin area. I eradicated the bird mites in about a week and have not encountered any since. M.**

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#### **150 DEGREES KILLS THEM**

**When I wash/dry clothes, I don't do anything special. HOWEVER, prior to wearing, I make sure clothes are at 150 degrees F for 20 min or so, possibly longer. Measure temperature somehow and put them in the oven. A gas oven with the heat in the lower broiler area will not burn the clothes like an electric element. Sound a little extreme? It is, but here is why I do it; I did the experiment the other day. I knew I had them in my shoe/sock. Fired up the oven to 130 degrees, shoes/socks in, bugs not dead. Go to 150 degrees—bugs dead. The beauty of this is once up to temp, you can shut off the oven and it still stays hot. B.**

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#### **PCO HELPED WITH THE HOME INFESTATION**

**We are now dealing with what we think is our third incident of bird mite infestation. In the first incident a pest control company found an abandoned bird nest in our attic. He removed the nest and saturated the area around it with pesticide, spraying pesticide from the nest in a line to the wall, where my baby daughter first experienced the mites.**

(Her back and arms were covered with red bumps while her twin sister in the same room, but in a different crib, wasn't bitten.) The wall of that room where he felt the mites entered from the attic was also sprayed. He also sprayed the rest of the house but not as heavily. It seemed as though the mites traveled in a direct line from the nest into our home. The second time, in a different house, we immediately recognized the bites. To us it feels as though a needle has been held in a flame and then pushed into our skin. There is a sharp feeling of heat and pain, then the itching. Again a pesticide company came to our home and found a bird's nest in an overhang above our back porch. I don't know what pesticide was used, but it solved our problem again.

We also did our own treatments in the house. All carpeted areas were sprinkled with a layer of borax (20 Mule Team Borax) and salt. We had learned this as a cure for flea problems and it also seemed to assist in getting rid of the mites as long as we also had pesticide treatment. Also, all vacuuming was done with mothballs inside the vacuum cleaner bag to kill all mites that were vacuumed up. We usually would leave the borax and salt in the carpet for several days before vacuuming. We also washed every bit of clothing we owned and wiped down drawers and closets with Pine Sol and water. The borax also leaves the carpets smelling clean and fresh.

Our experiences were terrible, but they only lasted a week or two. We did call pest control as soon as the bites began. Our first house was carpeted but our current house where the second and now the third infestation occurred has hardwood and tile on the first floor and carpet on the second floor. All hardwood and tile was vacuumed (with mothballs inside the vacuum cleaner bag) and then damp mopped with water and a small amount of Pine Sol. Thank you for your web site. I hope our experiences might offer some help to others. E.R.

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#### **VICK'S VAPOR RUB AND EUCALYPTUS OIL**

**1. When they become active put some Vick's vapor rub in your hair and rub it in to the scalp (don't worry about if your hair is long). You would think your head would get hot, but it not uncomfortable at all. If you have trouble spreading it, add some Eucalyptus Oil. This will make it far easier to spread and assist in eradicating mites**

**2. After doing this**

wear a shower cap, (most important) as this locks in the vapors. Sleep with it on and I assure you, you will sleep in peace. Next morning I generally wash my hair with soap three times and finish off with shampoo. (It takes a bit of effort to get it all out, but well worth it.) 3. When dealing with carpet and furnishings use Eucalyptus Oil and if you have a steam mop or steamer, or similar hit them with that after spraying the oil, it works well and smells great too. If you don't have a steamer get your hands on a steam vaporizer and add eucalyptus oil. 4. Other action taken for the inside of my body to eradicate them is eat lots of fresh garlic bread almost every night, this does help to fight the inside but I don't think its essential because we are only concerned about breaking the life cycle, but I like garlic bread anyway. 5. The final action is to thank GOD in Prayer! W.T.

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#### **SAN FRANCISCO APARTMENT INFESTED AFTER HEAVY RAINS**

I moved back to the city of San Francisco, forgoing all the other apartments of modern living enamored by the classic and old-fashioned charming buildings so typical of this city...art deco, and top floor overlooking the city with a glimpse of the top part of the Golden Gate Bridge. Now in retrospect, knowingly overlooked many major flaws; such as a cracked ceiling in the bathroom, filthy grout in the kitchen, which I scrubbed prior to moving my stuff and food content, etc. All was well with routine breakfast in bed before work, enjoying the city view upon dawn, etc. When the California rain started rather mildly in November with a noticeable leak in my top floor apartment, reported such to the owner building manager. The bath room ceiling collapsed in the first week of January after a serious rain storm, leaving debris all over, including about 4x4 foot hole of chicken wire only gap with the roof top. The debris was removed promptly then I had not heard anything, was depressed and called the City Inspector; which prompted a rather quick 'fixing' of the roof/bathroom ceiling problem.

Because this apartment building had pigeons nesting on the roof, the bird mites migrated to my apartment because of the exposed hole in the roof and the resulting 6 months exposure to the open roof and all it occupied. Then I noticed more and more of a flurry of tiny pests in my

apartment, in my bed, then in my nose, eyes, ears, throat, coughed a lot, then I noticed these hovering things accompanying me in my car, I was startled, what is going on...they followed me even to my workplace, which entails patients of mostly immune compromised situations. I have noticed people scratching themselves or coughing a little, I thought I was losing my mind. I desperately spent hours on the internet looking for answers about pests, called the building manager to get the PCO to check the place out, glue traps were placed, no findings, repeatedly told me, that no insects could go with me, on me or on my clothes; when actually one of my phone call to their main office turned out much more support by the receptionist who totally agreed that my clothes etc., may have already got infested. I further checked, for scabies, for fleas, etc., and hoped it would be that simple.

I neglected all my life's work and routines, merely consumed to finding answer to this infestation, I always hated anything that crawls, bites, vermin...took great precaution in keeping things clean just for that purpose....no pets, just me. Then finally in search of the source of my infestation, a few weeks ago I started spraying bleach foam cleaners on the stove top encasing and finally was able to lift it, I was ill from the stench and the subsequent continuous draining of dark brown, gel like drainage (sewage!). I saw more of the flurry of those tiny bugs!!! I am still stunned, shocked. They finally removed that thing after another threat of calling the City Inspector, I was sure that would be the end of my parasite/insect invasion...NO, it was not. Now I was really depressed.

Then I went to this website ([birdmites.org](http://birdmites.org)) and was stunned, relieved, bewildered all at the same time. Everything matched my 'symptoms'. I cried, then went on to buy things that most people advised. My body is hostage to these invaders, more like a Sci Fi movie. My life has changed! I have read all of the site's chapter and forum 'poster's' input. I realized that I am not alone any longer in my own hell, yet disturbed that I have found a label for my newly found affliction. I am grateful for all of your advise and followed up today, buying my defenses, changing apartment efforts, hoping to keep my new furniture and bedding. I am all alone and would appreciate a friend, a kindred soul... one that knows of this bird mite curse. M.

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### **HYDROGEN PEROXIDE HELPED**

**I took a bird's nest into my home to hatch some eggs. I never dreamed what would take place after almost 8 months now. We have suffered with the itching, crawlies and the biting and we went to doctors and dermatologists...the whole nine yards. I lost my job of 10 years and could not even be around my grandchild. We have spent so much time and money just to find what works, but the miracle treatment has finally come that really helped. It is 35% hydrogen peroxide. You can take a bath in it and also spray with it, but it has to be diluted with water and you can't get this on your skin. It's really hot, only 2 cups in a tub or bath water. I don't know if this will work for you but it has given us most of our lives back and we sleep all night, and now I am going back to school. If you are infested with mites it is going to take some patience but this treatment wasn't harmful to our health. S.F.**

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### **EPSOM SALT SEEMS TO HELP**

**Epsom salt kills these things. Take a one pint empty Listerine bottle and put 2 inches of Epsom salt in it and fill the rest with water. Shake this up until completely dissolved. Now take a shower with dawn dishwashing liquid. Turn the water to the shower off and pour and rub in the salt water over your body from head to toe. Work it in well into your hair and scalp and around your eyes and groin area but be sure your entire body is covered in the salt. Get out of the shower stall; do not use a towel it will rub the salt off. Now, take a hair blow drier and blow dry your body until the salt has dried on your skin. Your skin after drying should have a whitish look to it from the salt being dried on the skin. This kills what ever is on your skin...period. Be sure and soak every item of clothing and bedding at least over night. It can be in plain water or Epsom salt water but be sure and weight the items down so that they stay completely submerged for at least over night. Then wash the items with 2 cups of Clorox. This procedure is now helping many people put an end to this nightmare...the salt seems to kill these things. Good luck and I hope this information helps you also. R.**

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### **INVESTING IN A GOOD STEAMER MADE A DIFFERENCE**

**I have discovered that mites tend to infest wood, which is a big problem since most people have wooden floors and furniture in there homes. If you have marble flooring throughout your house you're in luck. If you have hard wood floors this may be a problem since most of the mites are probably living in cracks and crevices and then come out at night to infect clothing or furniture. They love cotton so I would suggest buying satin night suits and satin bed sheets so you can sleep peacefully at night. The best thing I found that worked was spending a 100\$ and buying a professional steamer. Don't waste money on those 30-40\$ ones as they are useless. Buy a good brand and it will pay off in the long run. I found this to be the most affective because with a light weight portable steamer it is easy to steam clothes, curtains, couches, cushions, bed sheets, etc. It not only kills the mites but the eggs as well, which most chemicals don't.**

**My advice to all of you suffering out there is to invest in a professional Cloth Steamer instead of an iron so you can use it on everything. Make sure you buy a brand that generates a good amount of steam hot enough to burn them. It should have a long tube and be a hand held almost like a vacuum cleaner so you can stretch it long enough to move it around and steam everything in the house. You can even try having your hard wood floors steam cleaned if you have a big house. Some carpet cleaning companies can come and do this for you. Based on experience I noticed no chemicals kill the mite eggs no matter what they advertise, and a lot of times the mites become immune to things; however by using a steamer its logical because it burns the mites and there eggs. It should be used carefully but it's fairly easy to use. I hope this helps!! T.C.**

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### **TWO YEAR BATTLE AND THE DOCTORS CAN'T HELP**

**I am a single mother with two teen daughters. Our lives have been forever changed by bird mites. My current outbreak started this time on my leg as I noticed a very itchy small red patch on my leg. Before I knew it they were spreading to my hands and fingers due to itching my skin...without knowing once again the cycle begins. My infestation started a little over two years ago and because like most people, my**

**lack of parasite education I was 6 months into being fully infested before anyone took me serious. It was an emergency room nightmare with numerous trips to the ER feeling at one point I might actually die from being this sick; pointing out things on my skin saying "look its right there I can feel it". But told time after time, "Sorry Ma'm I don't see anything, we're going to treat you for scabies and send you home".**

**During my outbreaks I would collect numerous samples, tiny little things barely visible, yet I knew they were there. Yet every time the hospital labs would come back with 'Non-human parasite' so the ER doctors would write it off as 'NOT a parasite'. It wasn't until I walked into my dermatologist's office after months of test with only a positive toxoplasmosis result and said "ok, its moving on me right now inside my nose, take it out please, so you can see what it is". That was the day I heard him say "that's a bird mite".**

**I became my own doctor after that, researching on the Internet. Its a very lonely process and just when I thought a few months ago I was in the safe zone, now my 13 yr old daughter broke out and is scared to death...because she watched how sick i was and how doctors treated me. The doctor gave me Ivermectin and a lotion made of Eurax and Bethol yet we are unable thru all our efforts to stop the mites. I'm hoping someone who reads this has some insightful things we can do or ways to get doctors to identify this better and ways to cure it. If anyone has had a bird mite infestation and had any medical test that is more prone to come back positive with mites I would love feedback. This is a horrific way to live and the medical field needs to be re-educated in parasites. L.**

**(It is unfortunate that with all the good information available now, that some doctors will not take the time to learn more about parasites and how they affect people. It has been documented for years now that scabies treatment does not work for bird mites on humans. So all we can do is educate others one at a time. You can print out the 'research' information and have the doctor refer to these articles...Administrator)**

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### **SPRAY CONCOCTION THAT HELPS**

**I wanted to share with your forum how I got rid of these nasty bird**

mite "demons", or at least made my home feel like home again. First let me say, thank the Lord for this forum, without it, I never would have come across ideas and method! Your forum has helped me cope with this nightmare, as with many others, and shown that we are not alone in this fight. I sincerely thank you for that! Ok, On with the good news on how reduce the number of these suckers by at least 95%. I have been virtually mite free for a week!

**Get some: Hydrogen Peroxide 3%, (mixing stronger peroxide with other chemicals can be explosive), Witch Hazel (86% or higher), Ethyl Alcohol, and Tea Tree Oil (100% pure) (or Neem Oil), Boric Acid, Cedar Chips or Cedar Oil. Get a good spray bottle for home and car and a smaller on for personal use.. Mix the Peroxide, Witch Hazel, Ethyl Alcohol and the Tea Tree Oil into your large sprayer (1:1:1 ratio with 30-40 drops of Tea Tree Oil). Vacuum the house first and then spray all rooms from ceiling down to walls and then carpet. Let it dry and vacuum again. You have to hit the ceilings, don't skip it. Sprinkle Boric Acid into corners and along baseboards. Take a shower. Do the spraying again the next day and next if your problem is extreme, except Boric Acid. Place the cedar chips or cedar oil at corners of bedroom. Drip Tea Tree oil around perimeter of bed. Use the small hair spay bottle, filled with ethyl and few drops of Tea Oil to spray yourself when you get a crawling sensation or bite; you will get these for a little while. That's it! I also used ant traps (generic black pucks) Bayer Advanced Home Pest Control, and Raid Fumigator (12% permethrin), however the above ingredients made the difference in 1 day. D.**

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#### **PESTENE PRODUCT IN AUSTRALIA HELPS**

**During every spring these mites would infest the house in the thousands because of the increase in birds. First signs are often red marks or bumps on the skin and an overwhelming sensation that there are bugs crawling on your skin. For months me and my family knew nothing about these creatures and only after consulting a doctor, he suggested these could be bird mite bites and our house was infected. So my mum goes to work and blabbers about this infestation to people around the workstation and one of her friends said that he keeps**

dozens of birds at his' house and he uses insect power in each corner of each room in his' house and never experienced these creatures.

After hearing about this, we asked him to order a batch of this power named Pestene by the company Inca. It is consisted of 50g/kg of Sulphur and 10g/kg of Rotenone (from Cube Roots) and is yes only used on animals. However, in spite of this we sprinkled a decent amount of this into each corner of every room in the house. To further eliminate the problem we cleared the birds nest in the roof and sprinkled a lot of powder in there and vacuumed and cleaned the bed sheets in a matter of days they were all exterminated due to the ceasing of bite marks. So anyways this year we were a little late on the treatment and our house is infested once again and we did the same routine as last time and this time it was horrendous. An hour after sprinkling the power in the roof attic? A section of the ceiling was covered in mites and the thought of that now makes my skin crawl. (pun not intended) In a matter of seconds hundreds were dropping down and dying and it was like the tiles were speckled with black sand. So anyways it is only been like 2 days and most of them died out and I am hopeful that they will eventually die out in a few days. K.

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#### WITCH HAZEL WITH PINE OIL SEEMS TO HELP

I have found the best option yet other than the pesticides. Witch Hazel (\$8 a bottle in any drug store) seems to kill the bugs and eggs and does not harm humans. It even works better than the ethyl alcohol. I put it in a spray bottle with some pine oil (from a health food store) and spray like crazy. That coupled with a carpet flea powder, Flea Killer by Enforcer is finally doing the trick in my car and office. A dust mite spray and bed bug spray "Goodnight" by Srayway available in Home Depot got them out of some of my furniture. The previously mentioned chemicals did work on the walls and ceiling of my last condo. I had to throw out most of the fairly new furniture though. The old condo seems to be bug free at last. I have managed to keep them out of the new condo by showering with liquid Dial soap with Triclosan (some kind of insecticide that doesn't harm you) when I get home and changing and treating the clothes that I was wearing. I am finally sleeping through the night after almost two years of hell. The Bounce

sheets had really helped me sleep in the old condo. I also used to tuck them in my clothes. Try the Witch Hazel-it really works. The critters seem to adapt to most other chemicals after a short while. I am still being treated for Morgellon's. Some believe that the bird mites leave a bacteria on your skin that causes the disease. I believe it to be true. The Devil's messengers-that's what I call them. The strategies that I have mentioned all work though most chemicals stop working after a while. As always, keep up the fight-there is hope!! Good luck! W.

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#### DE SEEMS TO HELP

Thank you for the bird mites website. It helped me during my recent and continuing home infestation which I have been dealing with since early July. I have tried various chemicals and none of them seem to eradicate the mites; they die down for a couple of days and then come back. I think the chemical insecticides are producing a breed of "super mites", in a manner similar to the over-use of antibiotics creating super bacteria that can no longer be killed by antibiotics -- I believe we already have chemical-resistant mites and that's why the problem is so horrible. I have the terrible feeling that mite infestations are going to start plaguing people more and more, much like the current bedbug problem. I am currently using diatomaceous earth (amorphous silicate, food chemical grade) to try to kill the bugs mechanically rather than chemically. I have powdered this dust over all of my floors, which are grooved hardwood, and powdered my cats, all of my shoes, furniture and mattress. I started doing this eight days ago, and I think the problem is finally abating. The mites are not yet eradicated from my home, but I am slowly getting some relief. *The words "nightmare" and "living Hell" describe this problem well.* I hope other mite sufferers will hear about the possibility of diatomaceous earth helping with the problem. S.

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#### GETTING DISCOURAGED

I've been on this site plenty of times in the last 3 years or so. I've been dealing with these evil parasites for about that long...I don't know, maybe a little longer. I am about to go insane. The latest outbreak if you want to call it that, has me feeling totally hopeless. The worst thing

is that I have horrible allergies. I already have to take Flonase and Claritin and now these mites have my eyes burning and staying bloodshot all day long. My eyes feel sticky when I blink and feel like I have dirt in them. I feel them crawling in my nose most of the day. My nose runs and is stopped up as well. *I would not wish this hell on my worst enemy.*

I know that I definitely have rodent mites because I have had an ongoing rat problem for a few years. My house is also really old and the leaky roof is letting excess moisture build up. I don't even want to know how many of these things are in my house. Last night I bombed the house like Rambo. My house is only like 1200 square ft. I put 2 foggers in the attic, one in the kitchen, one in the living room, and 1 in the crawl space under my house. Came home and felt them biting. I freaked out, starting having a panic attack, and went to stay at my mothers for a while. I've almost given up. It's just too much work to rid of these cursed mites!!! Sorry, I am just so angry. I don't have any answers. I just want to add my story to show others that they are not alone. Everybody thinks I'm crazy. Ha...I wish I was just crazy. Invisible bugs are ruining my life. Stay strong everybody. B.

**(The rodent mite is a close cousin to bird mites, in fact some rodents can actually be infested by bird mites. So the treatment options are basically the same, as both are very difficult to remove from the home environment...Administrator)**

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### **SOME PROGRESS BUT NOW MORGELLONS**

I continue my fight with the mites. I have found a few new options that help. First and cheapest: cayenne pepper. The mites do not like it. I discovered that after eating spicy food, they did not bother me (the tequila works too but is a bit impractical for everyday life). I went to the health food store and bought the cayenne capsules. I also sprinkled it about everywhere. Caution: do not get it in your eyes as I did on the way to work this morning!! I had to pull over and felt as if someone had maced me. Hopefully, the mites feel the same. Next: Delta pesticide available at [pestsparay.com](http://pestsparay.com) seemed to have made a dent. I did use Tempo SC with a growth regulator from [Bugspray.com](http://Bugspray.com). These

are professional exterminator sites. Turns out that you cannot spray more than once a week and need to switch off because they become immune. In between, I spray with the ethyl alcohol and continue to use Bounce fabric softener sheets. They also do not peppermint oil and will leave you alone. I can now sit on some of my furniture and sleep through the night. There is hope!

Unfortunately, I now have Morgellons and am being treated for it. They believe that it was caused by the bird mites. The common thread in people that have Morgellons is a bacterial organism that seems to be present in most infected people. The car is still a problem probably because of the heat, humidity and carpet. I still am going to move from my condo soon and pray that they do not want to move with me. As always, good luck and don't let them win! W.

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#### **MITE INFESTATION AFFECTING OUR MARRIAGE**

I contracted bird mites while sorting items for a garage sale in my barn over three months ago (a swallow's nest was in the rafters). I have since moved out of that state and this Mite Fight has become my living hell! My husband is less than supportive and refuses to engage in practices that will eradicate the mites (i.e. he won't store his clothing in plastic tubs I have provided, he stores his clothes in an un-air-conditioned room). I, on the other hand, have become obsessed with washing (in bleach or epsom salt and shrinking everything in a cooking hot dryer), storing things in moth ball filled storage bins, bathing in baby oil twice a day and scrubbing with medicated shampoo, putting Vicks in my ears, nose, genitals, mouth and around my neck at night. I also lint-roller the bed, spray it (it is covered in vinyl protectors and taped shut at the nylon zipper), use baby oil (mineral oil) when I remove the satin sheet in the AM and spray it with baby oil to soak during the day.

During the day I soak the wood floor in baby oil; using a Swifter mop to force the oil into the wood floor cracks. I bathe twice a day and use paper towels (the softest I can find) to dry. I have soaked with 1 cup Clorox for 1 hour twice in the past 5 days. I do not let towels or clothing sit; I immediately put them in a plastic bag and seal it off. I have taken to boiling my underwear and night clothes on the stove for 20 minutes.

**I have turned the water heater up to 150 degrees to do laundry. Everything is placed in the dryer with Bounce sheets. I leave Bounce sheets scattered on the floor to deter any stray mites. I have scrubbed by hand the bathroom floor with a Clorox liquid/detergent mix. I use Arrid extra dry spray deodorant. All my clothes are sealed off in bags with mothballs. I run the a/c night and day. I can't bear to go outside in the heat or humidity because the itching drives me insane.**

**I desperately need to rid my life of mites...my marriage is in peril. I have seen my physician and he gave me a prescription for Claritin and said the itching was the mite feces! (BTW, the Claritin doesn't work). Sarna Anti-itch lotion provides great relief. You can buy it at Target, Rite Aid, Wal-Mart in the Medicated lotions aisle. It is expensive but provides great relief. Your website has been a Godsend! Bless you! J.**

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#### **LIME SULFUR OIL REALLY HELPS**

**After dealing with Bird Mites for about 3 years, here are some beneficial tips: Mites are not insects therefore most insecticides and insect sprays wont work. You must look for products specially formulated for mites called Miticides. A good place to start would be your local plant nursery or garden store. They carry several products to kill mites. From personal experiences I cannot stress enough how good SULFUR works!! I bought Lime Sulfur Oil from the Bonide Company. Dilute it with some water or baby oil and spray everywhere in the house and on your skin too! Powder sulfur, lime sulfur oil, sulfur dust, all work great. You can use lime sulfur on your skin as well. It will kill all mites, larvae, bacteria and acne too!! Bath in sulfur oil daily. Be careful not to get sulfur powder in lungs or eyes. Mix with water to create a paste or oil. I highly recommend purchasing sulfur from Amazon.com; it's cheaper and ships fast too, or you can ask your local gardening store or nursery to order you some if they are out of stock.**

**Borax also works. Wash clothing in high heat with Borax, steam iron clothes, linens, upholstery etc anything clothe. These mites infect clothing very fast for some reason and love cotton but not satin. Wear satin clothing to sleep in at night...that helps. Put vinyl protectors on**

**mattresses, pillows etc. Dry clean items that cannot be washed, vacuum thoroughly. Basically, the usual drill. Remove all body hair... these mites like to crawl on hair. Therefore, I recommend removing all hair from your body. Purchase a steam iron for clothing. I have tried Arrid extra dry but am not sure if it kills the mites or is just an antihistamine? Anyway, if you have hardwood floors mop sulfur oil into them. Dust sulfur powder on carpets. Do whatever it takes. Don't let them breed because they reproduce fast. Remove pets. Dip them in Lime Sulfur. Remove birds nests etc. After battling with these mites for years I have used products in the past like Borax, Boric Acid, Pine Sol, vinegar, Diatomaceous Earth, Sevin Dust, Malathion, fumigation, fogging, Permethrin, Pyrethrin, etc, etc. You name it, I've used it. Good Luck to all of you battling this unknown bird mite. It's crazy how in today's modern economy with all these pesticides nobody knows what these critters are. Anyway, I hope all this helps! TC.**

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#### **BIRD MITE INFESTATION CREATING HAVOC**

**I had a bird nest on the brick column on the inside of my open front porch, only 4 or 5 feet from my front door and window. I thought it was great having baby Mourning Doves and didn't know that one of the baby birds was dead on the front porch for 48 hours because I enter and leave from the back. I believe that it died and the parents pushed it out long before it was ready to leave. I didn't realize this at the time and left the empty nest there. I opened the window, put a large fan in it, and now realize that I was blowing the mites into the house. A week later, I casually removed the nest without care. I was going to have an exterminator come out but he was going to use Pyrethrins and I'm glad that I saved the \$500.00! Because your website explained that it doesn't work.**

**I'm feeling quite hopeless now. I have expensive couches, beddings, wood antique beds, and don't know if I can rid of these mites that are crawling over me continuously. The cat is a big source of spreading infestation and he is my best buddy and doesn't understand why I don't want to touch him. My skin is dying from frequent bleach showers. I feel them in my eyes and started eye rinses with boric acid. I feel them going up my nose and blow profusely (wakes me at night).**

**I'm isolating myself, my friends don't need this. I won't have lunch with them today, I won't see Ana's baby born, I won't see my nephew's opening ceremony into graduate school for his PhD. I don't get any help from the doctors that I have talked to. I really need support, financially and emotionally...How am I going to start a new job like this next week?? J.**

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#### **MY LIFE HAS BEEN TORN APART BY THIS**

**It is hard for me to even go onto this website and write this. But I want everyone to know that I think these things helped me. Sell your car!!! This was huge for me. Getting rid of my car was the number one factor to feeling better! Move out of your house!!! I know this is hard, but I think it is necessary. I think that washing all my clothes in ammonia (which you can get at Walmart for a very low cost), really helped. Also, taking bathes in bleach. I even washed my hair with the Clorox bleach. I have brown hair and it did not bleach it. But the bleach did really help to kill the bastards. Get Pantene conditioner extra dry hair so your hair will not feel like straw. Take bathes in 6 jars of salt (kosher is better—you can get it at Walmart). Alternate bathing with the salt, bleach, and then really expensive food grade hydrogen peroxide, which you have to get at a natural health food store. Do not bathe in these together. Use the bleach all by itself, then the salt all by itself, then the food grade hydrogen peroxide by itself or with Epsom salt. The enzyme cleaners are expensive and do not work very well.**

**Please try these things I listed. I truly believe they help. I still feel scared all the time and still feel some weird crawlies in my nose, but I feel almost normal. I still wonder if it is related to Lymes Disease. I feel like I have gotten Lymes Disease from these bugs. I was tested but the results came back inconclusive. That is typical right?! Since no one can seem to help us!! I have spent so much money just like you all. I feel for all of you. My life has been torn apart by this. It is awful...I wanted to commit suicide but did not only because of my dog, Mom and brother. C.**

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#### **THESE CHEMICALS SEEM TO BE WORKING**

**What seemed to work best was the Tempo SC with Beta Cyfluthrin and the Gontrol IGR mixed together as directed. It's one ounce of each in a gallon of water. I applied it with a regular bug sprayer using the spray for surface areas including the walls (this does not stain) and the stream for cracks and crevices. It's best to wear rubber gloves and cover your skin when applying. I also ripped up the carpet and spread Diatomaceous Earth and boric acid under the carpet and relaid it. Along with the Tempo and IGR I used a deep penetrating fogger by drilling holes in the walls and removing switch plates so they could not hide in the walls during treatment. The holes were easy to fill with regular spackling.**

**The applications of Tempo and IGR were made on alternate days. Mornings in my bedroom and areas of the house I could close off from the dog, and evenings in the main living area for one week. I did not wait the week everyone else says to. I think it just gives the ones that could hide time to gain strength. So I applied as often as I could until I could sleep without plastic wrapped around me. I found a pest control product site that gave me free shipping and in one case the product came in two days priority mail. ([www.domyownpestcontrol.com](http://www.domyownpestcontrol.com)) They had a knowledgeable staff that made suggestions professional PCO's should be making if not for their greed. I am going on 5 days now with little to no activity from them. I won't use the word eradicate, I will use the words diminished and controlled in a dramatic fashion. I hope this info helps. L.**

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#### **SELLING MY CONDO BECAUSE OF THESE BIRD MITES**

**The exterminator fogged twice and it did no good or at least very little good. More money and time wasted. An entomologist identified them as Bird mites, which thanks to your site, I had figured out long ago. Orkin says that you have to treat every condo above, next to and below to solve the problem but I am just getting out because they already think that I am crazy in the building! I wasted so much time and money previously when I believed them to be fleas. I have been trying other products because I will not let them beat me! A reader recommendation about the Solfac had me searching all over the world for it and even contacting Bayer. Apparently, you just can't get it in the**

U.S. but you listed the active ingredient Beta-Cyfluthrin. Pestproducts.com and bugspray.com carry professional strength products like Tempo SC which has Beta-Cyfluthrin in it and they recommend to mix with an insect growth regulator (IGR). These guys seem to know their stuff but every time I call, they add some product to the mix. I am trying both now and will let you know. They say it will be at least a week before I feel a difference. I also just ordered "sidekick" bombs which they say will kill mites. Bombs seem necessary since they seem to hide so well. I have been told that they just retreat into the walls when you fog and then come out when it clears...great.

The guys who work at bugspray.com suggested that I spray the new condo very well before I move in. Hopefully, the residual effect of the chemical along with the growth regular that sterilizes the eggs will be the key and I will get my current condo under control soon. It is amazing to me that these creatures love me so much and do not seem to affect others. It made me feel so much better when they were scientifically identified so I felt less crazy. I do think that all of the chemicals are starting to work though I did not change the blankets last night, did not take a shower right before bed and ran out of Bounce so I did not have a good night.

Bird mites may indeed inherit the earth. I am in the process of selling my condo and buying another and am feverishly trying to get them under control before they infest the new condo. I plan to throw out much of the furniture and am soaking some of it with the spray, will seal it in contractor bags for a year and purchase covers for it because I cannot afford to replace the entire house and buy the new one. I am definitely going broke on this problem. I am throwing out thousands of dollars of furniture when I move. As long as this ends, I don't care! W.

**(Beta-cyfluthrin is reportedly 2-5 times more toxic to bugs compared to regular cyfluthrin. So whenever possible, look for this product... Administrator)**

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#### **HOUSE WE MOVED INTO IS INFESTED**

**I have been attacked by some type of mites since June (three months now), when my husband and I bought a house and moved. When we**

**first moved in I was surprised to see how many innocent birds were on the roof, gutters and backyard of the house, it was kind of cute; until I started to get bites at nighttime and was not able to see anything, just feeling the crawling sensation. I went to a Dermatologist and I was told I had Scabies and I was treated with Permethin and it didn't work. Thanks to your website I was able to figure out that my house was infested with bird mites. I read the stories about how to get rid of the mites and tried almost everything and so far the Arrid deodorant works immediately.**

**I have a baby at home and she sleeps in my room so I can't spray this thing at night when the baby is there. I also noticed that if I lie down on the bed the mites will start getting on me after about 10 minutes or so. If I sprayed on the bed when I am not on it, then it doesn't work. I sprayed Arrid in my car but I noticed that I have to do it everyday otherwise the mites come back. Same thing at work. I keep spraying everyday it is very exhausting and frustrating and sometimes I am afraid these things are never gonna go away. J.**

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#### **PROBLEMS AT WORK**

**Thanks from the bottom of my heart. You are the answer to my prayers. At least I know that I am not going crazy and that I am not the only one suffering from this type of infestation. I have very sensitive skin and suffer from bad allergies. I have been having these bites and crawling for about ten years now, mostly at my job. I have complained, they sprayed, but it didn't work. It never occurred to me that this could be due to bird mites. I could feel the crawling and mostly the bites and believe me, they itch like crazy. A few years ago, I went to see a dermatologist and she was of no help at all. When I showed her my arm covered with red dots she pushed my arm away from her, and in a repugnant manner said to me "I don't know what those are" and wrote a prescription for the itching and rash. Needless to say, that I never went to see her again, nor any other dermatologist.**

**I seem to be the only person who is complaining in the office. I could see other people itching and scratching, but no one complains. It is very hard for me to concentrate in my job due to the itching and**

crawling. Sometimes I get so desperate and frustrated that I turn off everything and go home. While in my car, whether is summer or winter, I turn the heat on, to kill whatever was biting me. I do not want to bring these creatures home. As soon as I get home I take a hot shower and I immediately feel much better. I've lost many nights of sleep over this. Only thinking that I have to return to work in the morning, and go thru the same nightmare again. I covered the office air vents with tape, but still get the bites. I placed a few small cups with water in it, to catch whatever was biting me, only to prove to myself that I was not going crazy. It was then when I noticed a few tiny dots in the water moving. I felt much better to know that, yes, there is something out there and I am not loosing it. These little creatures are so tiny that you could only see them with a magnifying glass. I've been on Benadryl, pills and lotions for a long time, to the point that I am already addicted to it. I can't be without it. I am willing to try anything at this very moment. I am almost going out of my mind. Please help! AO

**(When mites are a problem in the office environment, it is important to find out if they are bird or rodent mites, if possible. This is often helpful in determining how best to get rid of the source. Rodent mites tend to be a year round problem with a fairly steady mite population, whereas bird mites tend to peak in spring/summer and tend to have a very large mite population...Administrator)**

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#### **MORGELLONS SYMPTOMS**

I've had more than just the bird mite problem recently, although I hadn't linked it with anything else. I have had problems with fibers too. Blue & black, and rarely red. I get the stinging, the biting, the crawling, but when I use tape to check for a mite, there is nothing there, or there are skinny fibers...sometimes many of them. I've wiped up my bathroom floor only to see the white wash cloth covered in pretty bright or light blue fibers (a turquoise- to light blue)...and under an 8 x magnifier, have seen them move on several occasions. The black ones are thicker, and more painful. I've taken a shower, to come out clean, and within minutes, have found coming on the towel or a wash cloth. I've had them come out when I've blown my nose. Until last night, I'd never even linked the two...but I think it all came from the

**bird mites.**

**(Follow-up email)...Have you thought perhaps maybe some of the others might be dealing with the same thing I am? I never would have known until just trying to catch a sample of one of the little bugs I used to see, and then seeing a fiber moving!! I think it might be a good idea to bring that to their attention. I never in a million years would have thought something like this could be real...but yeah..it is. This is such a horrible condition...like right out of the Sci-Fi movies.**

**I called the CDC today about the Morgellons. What a joke. They supposedly have a 'task force' looking into it. All you get is a recording, with them spouting off some limited info of some sort of nothing, and then they tell you they can't call you back due to all the calls, but want to gather information if you leave a message. They give you about 10 seconds to record!!!! I was so ticked! I am hoping to find a way to get a hold of Morgellons sufferers in the Tacoma area to start a support group, and to get onto the CDC. I pray that any Nurses or Dr's. who are willing to help, will come forward too. C.**

**(Although not common, there have been reports from some that what was initially a bird mite parasite problem, has become what is called Morgellons. With symptoms of stinging fibers, intense itching, skin lesions, and testing positive for Lyme Disease. It is quite possible that bird mites are a vector in some people, especially if there is a weakened immune system. There are some good Morgellons websites and also some misinformation about this disorder on the web, as Morgellons is not well understood. Any purported link to a specific organism is still conjecture until proven by the medical community... Administrator)**

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#### **MITES IN MOUTH AND EARS**

**We are entering our first month of this nightmare. We had a pigeon nest outside our bedroom window for months, of course having no idea of the dire consequences. The heat drove them in. The pigeons are gone now, but the infestation now resides on us. We've seen two skin doctors to no avail. One gave us Permethrin which didn't work. The next told both my husband and I that we have Dermogaphitis. I asked**

how we could suddenly both have the same condition and he told a story of four women who all had flea infestations and each got the same skin condition. He prescribed medicine that will "make us sleepy but remove the itch." We wanted a solution, not just cover up symptoms. Of course we did not fill the prescription. I live in Chicago with all of these supposedly top notch medical centers. I just can't believe no one will seriously deal with this. I suppose there's little money in it or they would. My biggest worry is that we may have given them to our grandkids. We were visiting them thinking the Permethrin creme would kill them as the doctor said. It did for a couple of days. While there, we got the crawling sensation but no bites.

Anyway, they are now in our nose, throat and ears. In addition to bites, I have a few small red spots (which the doctor called scratches.) Are these burrows? I'm wondering where this will end. We have fogged the bedroom and kitchen twice and sprayed with no change. We will try all of the suggestions that have been contributed on the site in the hope that we can get a hold of this. I am hopeful that the Chinese acupuncturist who I saw today may help. She is ordering us some herbs that she says will expel parasites. She said they will be bitter, but that a bitter climate in your body drives them away... not to eat sugar, etc. She ordered another herb to mix with vinegar for spraying on us and the surroundings. I'll let you know if it helps. S.

(Many have stated that the crawling mites on the skin, as well as in the mouth, ears, nose, etc, is the worst aspect; especially at night where it robs us of sleep. Mites do not always bite, only the mature female who is ready to reproduce. A person can go a long time with just the crawling sensation and without any biting, and then suddenly wake up with bite marks. Also, some people in the household can be bothered by them, and others not...Administrator)

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#### EXPENSE OF DEALING WITH EXTERMINATORS

I have found that straight ethyl alcohol (available next to the common rubbing alcohol in the pharmacy) kills them and it is cheap - (less than \$2 a bottle). I spray it all over my clothes and walls, vacuum and sleep covered in bounce sheets. It works better than the vinegar. They also

**hate menthol - Vicks Vaporub, menthol crystals, and are repelled by some essential oils - peppermint, pine needle, lavender, etc. I am going to try to find my fourth pest exterminator, who hopefully knows about them, and pay more money again. I estimate that I am up to over \$10,000 in over a year in exterminators, thrown out furniture, supplies, and taking my clothes and sheets to the laundry every day.**

**I have gotten a new car but it is now infested and have switched offices twice. I have probably blown my professional reputation of 18 years by spraying, vacuuming, etc. in the office. The smell of the sprays offends my co-workers. I now just keep quiet and suffer because people do not understand and I do not want them to think that I am insane. They do not bite my boyfriend ever! I have not had anyone visit my condo but him for over a year and am trying to sell it cheap. These mites either came from the neighbor's storage boxes next door (who had to move out due to the infestation), my "new" bed mattress from a discount place, or the pigeons on the windowsills? I sympathize with all of you and wish you all the best. W**

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#### **SOLFAC BY BAYER HELPS**

**I had recently started my personal battle against these evil organisms. After relentless prayers to God and hours of research, after talking needlessly to doctors, veterinarians, entomologists and so called experts who are supposed to know; I came across a product called Solfac produced by Bayer. It is a small aerosol that is used to fumigate the room. One must take all pets including fish tanks away from the room, close tightly doors and windows, also food must not be left exposed, then press the valve and leave the room. The can will automatically empty. You must leave the room closed for 4 hours, and then fully aerate it. And it does the job! I have done just the kitchen living room, and finally for the first night I have no more bites, crawling, nightmare! Tomorrow I am going to do the other rooms, which are less infested. I do not know if I will have to repeat the treatment as I have animals and they might have some residual mites on them. I use on them Acarene by a firm called Candioli. It is a spray used on pet birds with mites. I used on me together with a spray of alcohol and camphor when I felt a bite, but alone is not enough to rid**

the house of these pests. I am rushing this information to you, so that people who are enduring this hell may find some immediate relief.

Regards, MM

**(This report is from Italy. Solfac may not be available in every country. The active ingredient is BetaCyfluthrin .25%, and this ingredient also comes in a 10% WP that a PCO could use in the home...Administrator.)**

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#### **MITES FROM BIRD FEEDERS**

I was reading the post written by "S" about her Canary and her wildlife bird feeding project on her balcony. I too had my yard registered with the National Wildlife Federation. I have been president over state wide environmental groups and when I and my husband became infested with these mites from our bird feeders back in February 2006. I contacted "all" environmental groups. National Wildlife Federation, Audubon, Greenpeace, National Resource Defense Council and the list goes on and on. Not one...not one organization knew about bird mites or about the impact it is having on people or the impact it is having on the bird population. Please contact every environmental group you know of and let them know about what has happened to you and to the birds at your feeders. With many people in numbers calling and informing these groups they just might start looking into this situation and getting the word out not to feed the birds.

Also one other note: I have been using the Arrid Extra Dry antiperspirant - deodorant with the 24.6 % aluminum chlorohydrate which I have found fully in stock at every store I have been in and it works...period. Spray yourself and everything around you. Your cars and homes. The bugs can't live in the Arrid Extra Dry. It is bliss....no bites no crawling. R

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#### **TIPS FOR MITE INFESTATION**

My bird mite cure: I am a chimney repairman and I was bit to death for 2 years. A bath for 1 hour with 1 cup of baby oil was the turning point. They stopped living on me. I used sulfur 1 tsp and 12 tsp of hand lotion and apply head to toe, 3 days on 3 days off for 3 sessions...ahhhhh,

relief in 1 hr and total relief by the 2nd day. The clothes that get sulfur on it cannot be made odor free again, they must remain separate from others. You cannot dry them in a dryer or the sulfur smell will spread to the dryer. I hang them up in the bathroom and use the hair dryer for 4 hrs to dry.

I moved to a motel and boiled my clothes daily. Bagged all wallets and belts and gassed them with brake cleaner. Now I use CO2 in a ziplock to gas them. CO2 is deadly for humans even in small quantities, be careful to do it outside. I spray baby oil on every surface, it kills them dead. I then wash with 1/4 cup Dawn to 1 qt of water...bye bye bugs. The oil is their worst enemy. I battled this for 2 years with many treatments; enzyme cleaner, Miactin, salt, and garlic...oil is their downfall.

I put foot powder with Tolnaftate in the boots. My bed is wrapped in a plastic mattress covers then sprayed in baby oil then covered with another mattress cover. I then spread a new piece of plastic daily on the bed to sleep on. I use no sheets or pillow. I am so happy I could cry...No bugs! If I do get any, I use the very inexpensive sulfur hand creme lotion very diluted with 2 oz of water added to each tsp of creme/sulfur mix. It still does the trick. I have not used permethrin or other harsh chemicals. I think it is too strong for this environmental battle. Why poison yourself if they are in the environment and you might just pick another one up? Sulfur chases them away fast. My floors are all wood. I don't trust carpet anymore, and I can wax the floors. God Bless. JD

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#### CONDO INFESTED FROM BIRD'S NEST

About 5 years ago I had a canary that I later learned had a bad case of mites. Because of him I had fallen in love with birds, so a couple of years ago I began feeding wild birds on my condominium balcony and eventually established a very successful wildlife habitat certified by the National Wildlife Federation. I turned my balcony, with an outdoor carpet, into a very successful wildlife paradise in Pennsylvania: cardinals, titmice, chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, house finches, hummingbirds, flying squirrels and more. I caught house finches with conjunctivitis and brought them to a wildlife rehabilitator

**for treatment. It was clean: I vacuumed and kept the mess contained with plastic trays covered with hardware cloth. This year for the first time some house wrens built a nest. Every day I documented the nestling progress by taking the hollowed-out cedar log (when the parents left the nest), cradling it in the crook of my left arm, and taking pictures with the right. They were so adorable! It was such a miracle and a joy!**

**One morning after taking the photos, I went back inside and noticed my arms crawling with tiny bugs, which I whisked off with packing tape. There were dozens. Long story short: after days of research, and with a big magnifying glass, I identified them as bird mites (which I also found in my underwear, though minimal). I had inspected the birdhouse before, but had never seen any mites. So I took a strip of clear packaging tape and placed it over the hole of the birdhouse. To my horror, it picked up hundreds with just a quick, light touch. I placed the tape on some white paper, and the evidence showed that just the hole was loaded with them! The nest inside must have been infested even more! I waited for the babies to leave and then soaked the birdhouse in a bleach-water solution, which killed them all, but they are still out there, because when I've touched the pole or some nearby planters, which I had also sprayed down with bleach water, I've gotten some on my hands.**

**I believe that these things are now in my hair, my car rug, some of my clothes, my balcony outdoor rug, and I don't know where else, although, fortunately, I am not suffering with a big infestation like some of your other visitors. Looking back, this may have started with the canary -- I don't know. Tomorrow morning, I will begin dismantling the bird feeding station that has been a labor of love and a source of incredible joy for the last several years -- it's simply not worth the risk of a bird mite infestation. I only hope that doing so won't cause me to have a horrendous increase in mites inside my unit, and I hope that any I do have will go away and die.**

**The National Wildlife Federation, and other organizations that advocate creating "backyard wildlife habitats" in "small spaces," including apartment and condominium balconies, need to know about this danger and alert the public. I'm sure that they would never**

**knowingly suggest that people do this if they were aware of the danger. Unknowingly, I have put myself and my condo neighbors at risk for this nightmare. The only responsible thing to do is stop immediately. To anyone reading this, please spread the word: apartment/condo balconies are no places for wildlife habitats. Yes, they can be created quite successfully, but at great risk and for a terrible price. My bird-feeding hobby has come to an end. I will miss it terribly, but it's the right thing to do. -S.**

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### **ARRID HELPED**

**Nearly 20 years ago in 1988, I was attacked by something that may well have been bird mites. I honestly don't know, but it seemed like this and it was horrible. What began my trip in horror was innocently sitting in a sofa that I was unaware had been stored in a barn. By placing my behind in that sofa, which was obviously some animal's bed, I began a venture into hell that I was totally unprepared for. To make a long story short, I went through living hell, as I am sure most reading know. The symptoms described on this site fit mine almost exactly.**

**I tried everything to get rid of this devil. Someone in my family suggested antiperspirant (her grandmother's family remedy for chiggers and no-see-ums) and at first I thought it was ridiculous. After six months of this hell, I was willing to try anything, because yes, I was close to suicide. My quality of life was zero and I was at a point where I had nothing to live for. Out of desperation, I tried a dry spray-on type of antiperspirant, first on my chest where it seemed to be the worst. The result was immediate. Immediately upon application, the crawling ceased entirely, like a miracle. I couldn't believe how good I suddenly felt. I sprayed myself head to toe, being careful not to breathe in too much of the stuff. I then turned and sprayed my entire bed and bedding. It was almost like an exorcism. The demon was gone that fast.**

**For the first night in six months, I got a peaceful night's sleep, and slept uninterrupted for 18 hours. I was so tired and I think it was the physical and mental exhaustion that was pushing me close to suicide. Never in my life before or since have I ever considered it. After that night, the can of "Arrid Extra Dry" became a close friend, and for a few months, I was never without one. I tried other brands, but the only**

ones that seemed effective were the ones that were extra dry spray on, with aluminum -chloride- (?) in it. It was aluminum something, and it worked damn good and fast. I sprayed everything with it, and I didn't mind, because it did smell kind of nice, and mostly, it WORKED. I sprayed my car and all my possessions. Wherever I felt them on me, I sprayed myself and the local environment, i.e. car, closet, etc. This never failed.

Whatever this is, the author of this site is correct. These things can live a LONG time without a host, and they can also survive temperature extremes. A year later, I went back to some stuff I had in storage in Houston, and was immediately attacked. It was unmistakable. I could feel them hitting my arms and my face. A chill went down my spine. You gotta be kidding me. STILL? After a hot summer and damp cold winter? Obviously. Immediately I got a can of Arrid and sprayed the entire storage closet and contents. Infestation was halted immediately. My confidence restored and my fear gone.

I lost my job, lost my apartment, lost my girlfriend, and I was financially destroyed due to this beast- you know the drill- Doctors, motels, pesticides, all of it. Like others, they were in my car and at my place of employment. They also seemed to be preferential, in that there was something about me that they liked, but other people seemed not to be bothered by them, even if they had physical contact with me like shaking hands. This is to say the least, mind-boggling. Doctors are clueless and suggested I was on drugs, which I am sure you know is insulting. Their ignorance is equally disgusting. My frustration and inability to communicate my condition with others had me on the verge of insanity. Oh God how I wish I had internet in 1988.

I stumbled across this page by chance and I wanted to share my experience because I felt so bad for myself that I can truly feel bad and sorry for anyone who gets this. I wanted to share my experience in hopes that maybe it will help others and their suffering won't be as long as mine. I would also love to hear if this works for anyone else. Maybe it will be effective for lots of folks suffering this. If anyone tries this and it works for them, I would love to hear from them. Thank you, and God bless you all. S

**(Name and email address provided upon request...Administrator)**

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### **MITE HORROR STORY**

**I moved into an apartment that was above a very bad looking patio, which I ardently complained about to management (before I moved in). They assured me it would be dealt with, bird nests included. Much to my dismay, the day I moved in the lady downstairs who lays straw in winter to encourage ducks, geese and Barn Swallows to nest, disturbed them by hosing everything down. Within hours my apartment was overrun by this nightmare. She was knocking on my door wondering why I asked to have the nests removed. She proceeded to tell me they would have to wait for removal until the babies were old enough. Unfortunately, I had some idea what these things were and immediately called management. They sent their pest people, who did not take my word for it. They laid glue boards all around the apartment expecting to find fleas (I have a 70 lb. German Shepherd).**

**To this day, I do not know what they used to treat, as the treatment did nothing but stir them up. By the way, they did not like dealing with me directly, because of the fact that management at this point had agreed to release me from my lease, and therefore refused to pay for additional treatment. Try finding housing in a big city with a dog quickly! So, for an additional 8 wks I have been constantly fighting this battle. By now I started a claim with my renter's policy, only to discover any losses under this type of situation are not covered. So all the items I had to discard were just a loss. Most of which was brand new. My additional living expenses have gotten out of control. Extra vet bills, boarding for my dog until I got this situation at least controlled. They seemed to be feasting on her during the day. Also, she developed hot spots from digging at herself and the bites. Frontline and Revolution did nothing to keep them from her posterior end and legs. Pet owners most likely feel my pain. Pet fees are not cheap.**

**Ultimately I had to do some conclusive research, which included a trip to the local co-op and Terminix with samples I collected from the abandoned glue boards the prior PCO left behind. I was shocked to discover that I had a dual situation going on...something called springtails and bird mites. A double whammy!! By the way...springtails**

are also known parasites, but PCOs and entomology people will tell you otherwise. As most of you already know....don't waste money on co-pays to your doctor. They know nothing!!! Nor did my Vet.

8 wks in I have discarded my old fashioned water bed frame, sleeping on plastic, cleaning everything like an OCD person. Discarded all my winter things that were in storage. Fogged, sprayed, steamed and packed what is left in plastic tubs, mothballs included. My boss threatened to quarantine me from my job. They are definitely at work and in my car now. The cost of having to move again includes hiring movers for what is left, another deposit. I can't discard all of my furnishings...it's not in my budget to replace things I just replaced in April?? The thought that these things are coming with me is depressing to say the least, though I am grateful for the days they are less active.

Hopefully, by leaving behind the source and the majority of the population, I will be able to get things better controlled. My health has been compromised already, including opportunistic infections, ear-nose & throat problems, and respiratory problems. I surmise these things are nesting in my body. Orange cleaners have helped, spraying Listerine has helped also. It seems to repel them. I found an ant and roach killer to be somewhat successful also. It's not listed on the resources page. Its Hot Shot Ant & Roach Ultra in the silver can, not the blue can. It has a different consistency and sprays into cracks and crevices better, plus it's safer around electronics. Unfortunately for my neighbor it drove them into her living space. Word to the wise for apartment dwellers, be sure to research out the policies for pest control in your lease agreement before you sign it. Certainly, not everyone will have mites or springtails, but ultimately, any infestation can cause a nightmare both financially and to one's overall health. L

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### **CAT BOTHERED BY MITES TOO**

I don't know if bird mites are our problem, but the more I read, the more I think they are the culprit. About two weeks ago I started to see one or two bites upon waking, but oddly some would appear later in the day, at work etc. Coincidentally about the same time the bites appeared, I started to let my cat out onto our balcony that has a bird's

nest 20 ft up in the rafters. Now she's itching more than normal and I keep getting one or two bites every few days and feel my skin crawl at night. I've looked for fleas and any sign of insect and see nothing. I've stripped and cleaned the bed a few times, vacuumed, sprayed the furniture with Lysol. I'm pretty sure it isn't fleas because they LOVE me and have swarmed my ankles in the past. I haven't seen one flea and only about half of the bites are below the waist. I gave the cat a flea bath anyway last week and she is still scratching - mostly her ears and shoulders. I just made an appt. with the vet in 3 weeks to see if they can identify her itch and am ready to call the pest exterminator to get rid of the birds (I can hear babies up there, which is why I relented to act earlier on the nest). I'm trying to rid my life of toxic chemicals, so this would be a big blow to find out I need chemical bombing and Clorox baths. I'll start with the natural products and work up. Hopefully, I'm catching it early enough. Anyone had any success getting rid of them early on? Any input/advice is appreciated. Godspeed to all who are suffering as a result of these mites. E

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#### **MITES FROM PIGEONS**

I have had a noticeable bird mite problem for about a month now, we have a balcony outside our bedroom and pigeons were gathering on the balcony with smaller pigeons learning to fly from it, after a while I started to notice small insects on my computer monitor which is situated beside the window and balcony, shortly after that I found several bites on my leg, they did itch slightly but it didn't really bother me although I have always had a strong immune system. I have since found loads of these mites around my PC which I have scanned in so I can have a closer look and I now believe they are bird mites. The reason I am writing this is to ask if other people had similar experiences in the early months of their infestations, we will be moving house soon and I intend to replace all our bedding etc but I don't want to get rid of my PC and laptop, will the mites come with us to our new house?

The most difficult issue for us is the fact that we live in Northern Ireland and we haven't been able to find out if the mites we have here are a different breed from the mites in the US (since most of these

forums and websites are from the US we can only get info about American mites) and we haven't been able to find any insecticide or mite powders. I know my problem seems small compared to all of the other stories on your website and I sympathize with all the other bird mite sufferers I just need to know that I can get rid of these before it gets out of hand. B

**(Both the NFM and D. Gallinae are prevalent throughout Europe, and are documented in the medical literature as being a nuisance to humans ...Administrator)**

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### **CATS BOTHERED BY MITES**

I went to the vet and got some homeopathic relaxer for my cats. So when I got home I took a shower and washed my hair and then "caught" my cats one at a time and gave them a bath in a less stressful way than the first time. I used "coal tar" shampoo and baby shampoo. The mite shampoo I had gotten from the vet said not to get it near the eyes and that is why I use the baby shampoo on their faces - the main tickly place. The mite shampoo is expensive too. Before this last horrible episode, my cats scratched at their ears more than what I thought was normal so I ordered a "natural ear mite cure" and after only two applications my one cat was shaking his head worse than ever. I took him to the vet and he said his ears were red inside.

I took our once used top sheet and blanket and put it in the dryer for 15 minutes to kill anything that may be on them. And I vacuumed. And I turn two fans on the plastic bottom sheet and plastic-covered pillow on the bed. Oh, and blew it off with my hair drier. Then as I was sitting here at my computer I felt creepy and pin prickly things on my legs so I took another shower as I sung "paranoia strikes deep ... into your life it will creep..." I have been living with this for many years and coping the best I can, but now the "crawly nose" ones have reappeared and are bothering my cats. It is breaking my heart, which makes me intensify my search for help. Years ago I went to a dermatologist who thought I was nuts but for my cats. Why have we been given this burden? I have also had thoughts in the back of my mind - maybe not of suicide (though that would be an out) but of not dreading death to get out of this life. And I picture my two cats in the coffin with me. I

just love them so much. If it was only me I could deal better. J

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### **MOTOR OIL SMOTHERS THE MITES**

**My husband and I have been living with these mites for almost 16 months now. We did discover early on that straight Clorox kills the things, but just recently after reading a post on another site discovered that Mobil 1 fully synthetic motor oil 15W50 gets the things off the skin. If you put the oil on twice a day for two weeks, keeping it on everyday, 24 hours a day it gets rid of the things. You will still pick some up from the environment and from off your cloths and the fabric around you but the oil stops the itching and stops the rash and the flaking and sand paper feeling of the skin goes away. This motor oil has helped us more than anything we have tried. Our skin looks normal now and I can go out in public and not look like I have the plague. We are still searching for the best way to remove the things from our cloths so I will keep digging until I find something that works. R**

**(Mites are 'body breathers' and take in oxygen from the environment through pores in their exoskeleton. It appears that this strategy works by suffocating the mites that are on the skin. Some have also had success with baby oil or Vaseline...Administrator)**

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### **MITES AND LANDLORD PROBLEMS**

**I'm waiting for my Landlords to get rid of 4 bird nests, 2 of which are starling nests, attached to my apt. And another one right next door, who knows how many more on this triplex? Then there was also a squirrel building a nest above my dinning room in the attic. My landlady is not the nicest person in the world, and this situation has been nearly unbearable at times. I am on a very limited income, due to a liver disease and I am already dealing with the lack of health, energy, and then the following depression, now this!**

**My family is starting to think I'm losing my mind, and the DR couldn't tell what my bites were from. I miss my Grandchildren, but wouldn't want them or anyone to go through this. My Grand kids mean**

everything to me. I'd rather die than to have them end up thinking the Grandma that used to be so much fun turned into a crazy old lady who didn't want to see them because of bugs on her skin that no one could see!

The whole apt is carpeted too, with exceptions of the dinning room & bathroom & kitchen. I don't even have enough \$ to pay all of my bills when the electric is high, and now to have to pay for so much laundry and everything, I don't have a truck for the dump. Nor dump fees. No help from anyone. I am looking to God for help! I will gladly throw away my Sofa I got just a year and a half ago that cost about \$1,200, and my very nice several hundred dollar mattress set I just bought before that, along with the 4 poster bedroom set, just to move to a tiny cleanable apt somewhere! Do you know of anyone in Washington State that can help me? Thank you for ANY information & help you can give me! CC

**(If there is anyone in Washington State who knows of a knowledgeable physician, dermatologist or parasitologist; or who may be able to help this person in other ways, please contact the administrator.)**

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#### **DOCTORS AND PCO NO HELP**

I have been living in hell with bird mites for over 1 1/2 years now with no help from the professionals (Dr's, PCO). The Dr's pass the buck & tell me PCO will help me & PCO tells me Dr's will help me. So far no one has yet. I just received a letter from my co-op & PCO told them I had no bugs. The technician told me I had bird mites (no witnesses). Why are they not helping me at all? So far, they have thrown out a sample I gave them in the garbage (per technician) and now they are lying to the co-op. They said I should go back to the Dr. (4th time!) and get a skin scraping or take my comb/tape with me to prove I have birdmites which are microscopic. This will be the last thing I do before I leave my home. I have run out of options, it's leave or euthanasia. I am so angry & frustrated with PCO! I think they lied to the co-op, because they have no idea how to get rid of birdmites & they don't want to lose a contract with the co-op. These bugs are everywhere, but mostly in my bed. They are in my hair, skin, eyes, nose, ears & mouth.

**When they bite it hurts like a needle & then they suck my blood for about 2 minutes. It is the grossest thing I have endured in my life. I am withdrawn, depressed & suicidal because of these bugs. The saddest thing is, if I were someones pet, this hell would probably be over by now with help from a vet. It is because I am a human or woman that I can get no help. If anyone can help me let me know. I have tried about everything on the websites. Losing Hope, K.C.**

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#### **COPING WITH A MITE INFESTATION**

**I'm not entirely sure when I became a host, its been within the past 2-3 years at an old home I shared with a roommate. At this time I'm unable to take advantage of all of the suggestions as I am unable to afford extra showers and/or items that cost any money at all. I take lots of sleeping medication at night to simply sleep through the night. However, one day I only hope to never wake up at all. I'm totally unable to find any purpose. I just went to the doctor yesterday only to find out that he thought I was on drugs and recommended I be on anti-depressants and seek mental help. I've spent all my money on all kinds of different strategies, my problem is that I have no regular home now...If anyone has any suggestions that could assist my sanity I'd appreciate your help. I'm almost to a point of suicide. I can't take the itch anymore. I can't function. My friends don't believe me. My family doesn't believe. I don't know what to do. P**

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#### **HOME FUMIGATION**

**I have had some kind of mite parasites for 2 years now. I have lost 2 cats from them, & all my hair after 1 year. We had fumigation with a tent over our home, & these mites were still in the carpet alive & our vehicles. My truck was in the fumigation. It still has them in it. They are in our bedding, bed pad, carpet, clothes, every crack & crevice, even the ceiling & washer & dryer. My scalp is covered, along with my whole body, in between my fingers, knuckles, feet, toes, ankles, legs, knees, arms, elbows, private area, and rectum. I have not been able to get a hold on them by vacuuming, steam cleaning, or pest control. They are the size of a pin tip, and are brown, red, & black. They come off in the tub. I have samples. I am desperate, and miserable! JK**

**(When a PCO attempts fumigation with Vikane gas, they need to be aware that 10x is required for mites, and some type of follow-up about a week later. Anything less will usually not be effective, as some have been reporting...Administrator)**

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#### **FINDING ANSWERS**

**I have been troubled by mites for about 6 weeks now when a baby bird fell out of a nest on my roof. I have had some success in reducing their numbers but they aren't completely gone. I suffer from multiple chemical sensitivity so I am unable to use the vast majority of suggested solutions on your pages. I have had a pest exterminator block up some of the possible places birds could nest but two of them have said there is no possible way they could bird proof the house. I don't think they want to be bothered. Anyway, I can't spray anything because of my chemical sensitivity. I contacted the Entomology Department of a Sydney University. (They are the only place in Australia qualified to identify various bugs. That was quite a difficult experience.) They stated that Dermanyssus Gallinae was very unusual in mite infestations in Australia and it was very unlikely that's what it is. I now intend to send them a sample for testing. So what I would like to ask you and others visiting the site is has anyone had an identification of the mites that are troubling them because it sounds remarkably like my experience. They also advised that vacuuming and steam cleaning were the only none chemical means of getting rid of mites. Has anyone had any success with steam cleaning walls floors etc.? I would be extremely grateful for any feedback or suggestion because as you all know this is driving me to distraction. L**

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#### **SELLING MY HOUSE**

**I have been struggling with this from 2002 - 2007 and ended up selling my house and giving away all my stuff (poor people) when all the doctors said it was nothing. Even the vet said it was very rare. Now, reading your web site, I finally feel I have tools to deal with this. I don't know why this is not told to the public. I ended up with vinegar and**

baking soda but I am loosing the battle until now. I will try lots of your recommendations. Saltine crackers work when they get in your mouth and throat. Baking soda baths or on a wash clothe for face and body but wash it off with soap afterwards. My cat drug in a mouse and dead birds and now that I look back on everything, that is when the whole thing started. I also had Starlings nesting in my bathroom vent. I can't thank you enough. MSL

**(It cannot be overemphasized how important it is to NOT give away infested clothing and furniture to others. Please discard these items in the trash...Administrator)**

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### **FUMIGATION DID NOT HELP**

Double tenting the house did not cure the problem. We tented twice over ten days and they are back as strong as ever. Do not bring mail from one house to the next. I have infested a friends apt just by bringing mail (that was outside) from my old house. Find the ground zero in your house. If you don't the problem may never get better. I believe mine is beneath a cement pad in the back of the house. Someone who told me they have beaten the mites says he put combat roach bait behind every outlet and they started eating it and taking it back to the nest. I noticed a significant drop in the biters when I did this. The crawlers are still present. Latest strategy: I have attempted to vacuum seal the entire house and remove them out by hand. One CRUCIAL element that people have not stressed enough is that they are living on the ceilings and walls as well as in the furniture. Start with the ceilings when you clean and work your way down. Purchase space saver bags at Walmart. Add mothballs..make sure they are tightly sealed. You will notice a big difference just by putting your entire wardrobe into these bags. Purchase totes for everything in the house and seal them with duct tape or painters tape. Office: Purchase file totes and move ALL papers in the house into these totes. Remove any items that they might be able to possibly nest in. We are working on finding a refrigeration truck to move any additional furniture into for a few days to kill the mites. I have thrown out all of my furniture at this point and am refilling with all leather and plastic furniture.

**THERE IS NO SIMPLE SOLUTION TO THE BUGMARE! DO NOT BE**

**LAZY OR YOU WILL NOT MAKE ANY HEADWAY ON THE PROBLEM.  
M**

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**PRAY FOR ME**

**I recently came across your site. I have been dealing with this for almost 2 years. I have also been diagnosed with Lymes disease. The mites started after a bird nested on my family room window. Stupid me thought how awesome to watch the mother and small birds, drinking coffee before work...then the awful bites started. An exterminator told me that there were brown recluse in my house. After hundreds of dollars and no relief the exterminator put down glue traps. Very small almost microscopic bugs were all over them. He said they were bedbugs. Once again after throwing my bed away and spending more money, they were right back. The exterminator said there was no guarantee for bedbugs and charged me every treatment. I took the glue trap to the local extension office after losing faith with the exterminator. He said some type of mite not sure what. Then the bull's-eye rash started. I almost lost my job; everyone treated me like a walking disease. I am a widow on very limited income. I started taking the food grade DE and kelp, also treated the house and outside with DE and delta dust, but they are still infested here. I have spent hundreds of dollars on antibiotic treatments and tests for the Lymes disease, hundreds of dollars for chemicals and extermination. I am still being bitten and seeing the mites. I have dealt with many things and managed to keep my faith and strength...Pray for me and let me know about any more solutions, but remember I am very poor. MF**

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**SOME THINGS THAT HELP**

**We have made some major gains with these mites. One of the most important things to happen was the call I got from one of the doctors that I saw at the V.A. This was the day after we had our dogs put down. I was very upset and was feeling desperate. He confided to me: ..."there is some type of mite that is doing this to people, but we don't know if it's coming from the birds or the squirrels." He said all I could do is come to the hospital if I felt it had gotten worse or if I felt that I was starting to loose ground with the rash.**

**I have had this rash and itching for almost a year. I can't go around my family and no one has been inside my house since May '06. The way I looked at it.....I have nothing to loose. I went on the attack. I discovered back in February 06 that these things are killed by straight Clorox. It has to be Clorox brand of bleach because the cheaper brands will burn the skin. Well, it was my husband who came up with the one cup per bath. He started putting one cup of Clorox into his bath water every night. His skin started getting clear. I was having such a hard time and he was getting better. So as of November 2, 2006 here is what we have been doing. Every night we bath in about 8 inches of water with one cup of Clorox in the water. When we get out of the bath we would dry off and touch each bite or new area of rash or itching with a q-tip dipped into straight Clorox. It only burns where the mites are. I found out that if there are no mites on the skin we could pour the straight Clorox over our skin and it would feel like nothing more than water....but if the mites are there the skin would turn red and a burning sensation would form and last for about 10 minutes. After the ten minutes the mites are dead. Clorox kills these things.**

**Okay, after we touch each spot with the straight Clorox we let that dry and then we cover our selves from head to toe with a product called Sulfur 8. I thought if it will work for horses it should work for me. This is so greasy that it is hard to stand but it's better that those damn mites. Also, it has menthol in it and for about the first 30 minutes it makes us feel like we are freezing. We put that on us pretty thick including the scalp and we go to bed...I had a friend who called to wish us a Merry Christmas and as usual I ended up talking about this rash. She told me that she caught something like that this past summer after stocking her store shelves with new blue jeans that I think were made in China. She said that she put everything on that rash and nothing worked until out of desperation she found an old jar of Blue Star Ointment. She said she used that and over a few weeks the rash went away and she hasn't had it since. So we added the Blue Star ointment on the 12 of December. As of the 27th of December our skin is now clear of bites. No rashes and best yet no itching...We have also used straight 2% iodine on the bite marks. The betadine solution only has 1% and doesn't work. It has to be the 2 % iodine in the little bottles. This can be put on the scalp and will kill mites on the scalp just as well**

**as the straight Clorox does on the skin....using the iodine on the scalp will keep women's hair from falling out like it will with straight Clorox.**

**I burn four tea candles set on top of cup saucers turned upside down in each bedroom for 2 hours every night. At the same time I put one tea candle in each seat of my car. I set a timer and let them burn for the two hours. I'm trying to trick the mites into going for the warmth of the candles. I think it is working. As of Nov. 23 I feel no movement in the bed rooms after I lay down. No crawling sensations any more. I do switch bedrooms every 12 to 14 days. I live in a 4-bedroom house, which makes it easy to move often. I also have the carpets covered with 10% sevin dust. I vacuum this up every 3 days and put down more sevin. Our mattress is gently puffed down with the sevin. I put the 10% sevin in an old sock and I drop it on to the beds also in the cars. I vacuum and turn the mattresses every 3 days. If I had it do over again I would disassemble all my beds and sleep on those air mattresses. Those things can be put in to the shower stall and washed off every day.**

**We have clear skin. No movement sensations and no new bites. I still feel a little itchy on my scalp. I think it's like my dogs ears. We could get the mites off their bodies but we couldn't get them out of their ears. So I'm really hitting my hair and scalp hard. If I loose my hair I will just have to cope. I won't stop until I feel nothing. Over the last 2 weeks I'm feeling less and less itchy so I guess they are dying out up there also...I will never stop looking for this darn bug. I want to know exactly what it was that turned my world upside down and took my little dogs from me. This is spreading and making people go through living hell. We just have to get to the bottom of this and one day we will...R**

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#### **DIFFICULTY COPING WITHOUT ANSWERS**

**I moved to \*\*\*\* and have brought my hell with me. My car is infested. I had the Bugman come out and spray with bifenthrin and then fogged (I think with pyrethrin) ... I got in my car 72 hours later and felt crawlies. I vacuumed my car with an industrial vacuum but that night I got mauled. They are in my windpipe and eyes and ears and nose. I feel like I am the host. Moving has not helped. I am so depressed I feel suicidal... I am more alone than when I was in \*\*\*\*. At least I had friends to help me... now I have no one to help me. I don't even drive**

**my car and I am losing my life. I don't know how much longer I can live like this. I am scared every night and my new roommates probably think I am crazy. I have not told them about this and lie that my car is broken down...I am so depressed that I cannot function. My birthday was Christmas Eve and that was the worst night I have had since I moved. I got mauled that night...If you can think of anything please tell me. C**

**(Please keep this young lady in your prayers, as she is having a really hard time coping with this affliction...Administrator)**

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### **DERMATOLOGISTS DID NOT HELP**

**Just a note to let you know that I have been to so many dermatologists and a infectious disease specialist. The diagnosis was Delusional Parasitosis, which was incorrect. My husband was convinced that I was psychotic. I felt cheated from the medical world. When this skin rash started, I introduced a stray cat in my house who laid directly under my bird feeder. I developed an irritating rash on my neck, back, buttocks, and top of head. I treated my household environment with pesticides, which made me sicker. The bird mites infested my clothes, bed, exterior house and life.**

**I received answers from my local cooperative located in Harford County Maryland, hosted by University of Maryland. I spent thousands of dollars on medical treatments, medications, and veterinary care. My house is over 100 years old with problems in dampness and open areas in foundation. This web site has helped me deal with this infestation. I have utilized your resource to eradicate this infestation without poisonous chemicals. What a relief! My skin has improved greatly with the Ben Gay, alcohol, and shampoo. I have treated the house with Boric Acid, Moth Balls and Borax. The length of time I have been sick has been 29 months. Thank you so much for this information. MJ**

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### **FINDING ANSWERS**

**It amazes me how little is known about this in the medical community as well as with the entomologists. I just heard from one entomologist**

that thought that I must have hives or a reaction to some chemical in my environment because he says that since I removed the birds nests, the mites should be gone...I get so tired of washing and wearing out clothes and linens. I have been sleeping under "space blankets" that are aluminum or mylar and I spray those with the listerine and witch hazel combination. I am going to try some of the Kleen Free enzyme cleaner to see if that will work as well. Bounce now has a lint roller and I take that to work with me during the day...My exterminator said that he was being bitten by mites and one day they just went away. But he mentioned that it only lasted a couple of weeks for him. This has been a couple of months for me. It is a tough battle but sure hope we can win this one! D.

**(It is an astute comment about how little is known by entomologists and the medical community regarding bird mites affecting humans. It is as if people with this affliction have fallen into a crack with the 'experts'; as entomologists do not study humans and medical personnel mainly study internal parasites not ectoparasites. Dermatologists, who should be cognizant of this affliction, often are not, possibly because it still is not a common problem, as far as statistics go. And busy medical practitioners do not always have the time to study the latest research. Nevertheless, the documented facts are: Avian mite dermatitis is documented in the medical literature, acaroid mites do survive on human blood, and bird mite infestation of humans occur throughout the world. And even when a proper diagnosis can be made, the sad fact remains that there are no clear-cut solutions...Administrator)**

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### **DOCTORS COULD NOT PROVIDE ANSWERS**

I am amazed at how many people are going through this from all over the country. It helps to know that there are others going through this even though we haven't been able to get a handle on these critters. Had I known this would have happened, I never would have gone near those bird nests as I am sure many others are saying to themselves, too. I have been to several doctors and have talked to many people and unfortunately not everyone understands. I had one doctor tell me that even despite the bite marks on my skin that I was imagining all of this!

**If I can't get relief, I may put all of my furniture in storage for a year or so, rent a room somewhere and then start over again after all the critters are gone. I don't have kids and did have two parakeets but I have had them boarded ever since this nightmare began. D**

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### **SULFUR HELPS**

**I wanted to let you know what my husband and I have discovered. I was reading web sites and I came across a site where horses are now being covered with some type of mite. They said they had found that Sulfur cream worked the best. My husband and I went to the stores and we bought everything we could find with Sulfur in it. We found a product called "Sulfur 8" hair and scalp medicated conditioner. It has 2% Sulfur in it. We put this on us covering our bodies from head to toe. Within the first 6 hours I knew it was working. Three days later the mites that have plagued us for almost a year are gone. I was worried about my husband using the Sulfur 8 because he has an allergy to sulfur. He put it on and even after four days he has showed no reaction to the sulfur. I hardest thing about using this is that it is so greasy. Also for the first hour and a half it makes you feel like you are covered in menthol. We would put it on and go to bed, cover up and wait for the cooling sensation to go away. I still find it hard to believe that something this simple has worked better than any of the creams, lotions and poisons that we have used for almost a year. I hope this helps others who are suffering with the pain of living with mites on their skin. R**

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### **NIGHT TIME ROUTINE**

**I had a normal night's sleep last night-- the first one in months! I will tell you exactly what I did. I don't know what was the key but here it is. 1. We checked into a hotel last night. 2. I coated my dog's ears in Aquaphor (which is like Vaseline) We got this at Costco. It is cheap. 3. I sprayed myself and my dog with Safe2use enzyme cleaneer before entering the hotel room 4. I bathed in epsom salts and Safe2use...bath first for 20 minutes then shower with lots of scrubbing. 5. Sprayed my entire body and head with Safe2use enzyme cleaner after getting out of the shower. 6. Then covered my body with Gold Bond Medicated**

**Powder 7. I coated my entire private area in Aquaphor. I also coated my eyebrows, eyelashes, around my eyes, nostrils, lips and ears with Aquaphor. 8. We put dryer sheets under the sheet where our butts are and one in the pillow.**

**We had the 4th exterminator come yesterday. He put out glue boards and we did the thing with the IR light and pan of water. He wants to try to see what they are before doing anything. My problems with these mites just got really bad in the last 2 weeks...We have spent so much money on all this stuff. C.**

**Follow up: The PCO identified it as definite bird mites. They are coming over today to fog the house and everything. He says to have our dogs dipped. I got another great night's sleep--same exact regimen but even in the same hotel room as the night before. C.**

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#### **MITE INFESTATION FROM NEARBY WILDLIFE**

**I am a 37 year old female. I have been plagued by a mite invisible to the naked eye for the last year and a half. This mite attacks my feet, legs, wrists and arms during the day and at night they also bite me on my back, neck and butcrack. At night is when they are the most active. My cars are infested along with all the places in our home where I spend any time. At night they somehow, in spite of all my efforts, get in the bed and torture my sleep. There is no bite mark to observe, just a really itchy spot. Lately I have been forced to take a sleeping pill occasionally and when I do I awake with terribly itchy whelps. I assume that is because I am not brushing these things away because I am sleeping so heavily.**

**I lived for eight years in a rental house in the city. There was abundant wildlife (including cats) living under the house and in the attic and crawlspaces. We saw possums, raccoons, squirrels, rats, mice and birds... Several times animals died in the attic. Then there was a massive construction project that dropped the elevated freeway 100 yards away from the house, and all the animals that lived under the freeway relocated into the nearby houses including mine. The problem intensified. I thought that we only had a bad flea infestation. We would**

**poison for the fleas (professionally) and every time we poisoned, the problem did not go away, it almost seemed to worsen. I think we have removed the birds completely but I am not sure because no matter how many times the exterminator comes the problem never abates.**

**The only thing that seems to help a little is if I spray every thing (walls, ceilings, floors, beds and all surfaces) with boric acid water mist. I pushed the bed into the middle of the floor and taped up the legs of the frame. I have washed everything at a Laundromat with hot water detergent and borax and put every piece of fabric into clear plastic drum liners. I asked a friend to haul my mattress and box spring to the dump and instead he gave it to Katrina victims who were sleeping on the floor. They left it in the sun for a day, brought it inside and now are experiencing the same problems that I have. The van that was used to haul the box springs has infested and my friend has been itching.**

**Today I spoke with an urban entomologist who told me there was no such thing as what I describe, that I need to see a physician and that bird mites do not live in mattresses. Thanks for reading this and any info would be of help. L.**

**(It is unfortunate this entomologist had not done more research on D. Gallinae, before dispensing this advice. An acarologist or parasitologist is often a better resource for information regarding human infestation from mites...Administrator)**

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#### **TRYING DIFFERENT THINGS**

**My husband & I have been dealing with this for almost a year. I'm using a lot of the things that are recommended for dust mites, i.e. pillow covers, blanket covers, laundry additive etc. We haven't used them very long and I'm wondering if these covers are sufficient as a barrier, they say they have 2-10 micron pores. We have encased our mattresses in heavy plastic (WalMart paint section) with duct tape. I don't sleep on any type of bedding except for an encased pillow. I sleep in a nylon "flight" suit. It's warm like a sleeping bag, just easier to wash most everyday.**

**We've gone the Dr. route. They say it's delusional parasitosis. One**

treated us for scabies. The 5% Permethrin cream treatment was good. It's so expensive (and requires a prescription) I've made up my own cream with OTC 2.5% Permethrin (labeled for outside bugs). It works pretty good, but I'm afraid of health problems if I use it every night. I have also applied "Frontline" (flea treatment for dogs) all over my body. I applied half of the weight treatment for dogs just to see what would happen. There were some side effects. Headache, "hot flashes", but only for a couple of hours. Not sure if that's such a good idea. At this point, I'm not willing to totally risk my health. I'm getting close though . . . This problem appears to be effecting alot of people. There are a couple of possibilities where we picked these up. We stayed in a motel that allowed pets. (We'll never do that again) Felt the crawlies afterward . . . but they went away. We did have a bird's nest outside our bedroom window for a couple of springs. I removed it when I trimmed the bush, but didn't feel anything afterward. Where we think it happened was in a high school auditorium. We were sitting, watching a play and both of us felt them. We were there for about an hour, then left before it was over because we couldn't stand it. That was last November and we've been struggling ever since. S

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#### **DOGS AFFECTED ALSO**

We have removed all our bird feeders. Placed tarps over the ground under the feeders. We have 140 pounds of Sevin pellets in our back yard and 100 pounds of Sevin pellets in the front. Dealing with the itch and biting on me and my husband was bad enough but I have two small dogs. A 5 year old Pekingese and a 13 year old Welsh Pembroke Corgi. 3 months after I developed the rash and itching my dogs started shaking their heads and itching. We are now well into \$4,000.00 at the Vets. but the only thing that has helped them is something called "Revolution". We have to apply it every 12 days. I was having to give my dogs benadryl so they could sleep but I haven't had to give that to them in 5 weeks. They are into their 4th month on the Revolution. The mites seem to be harboring in the dogs ears. I have to use strong pesticides... I put one syringe full (3cc) of malathion in each ear once a week. I have sat for up to four hours just watching my dogs sleep. After going through the nightmare of watching them even scratch in their sleep it makes me feel good to know I have achieved a "restful" natural sleep

for them.

I have fought this nightmare in every way I know how. The only things that have made any difference is the Sevin dust, spray and concentrate. Clorox in our bath water...one cup per tub full....plus we pour straight Clorox on us when we feel them or see the rash. We pour the Clorox on, rub it in, wait for the burn and then down in the water we go. Ammonia works the same way. My skin reacts worse than my husbands does. A funny thing that we have discovered. When we pour or place the Clorox on with cotton balls our skin turns red every where the mites are. The skin stays normal color where the mites aren't. We use the ammonia and Clorox to "find" where the mites are. Then we hit that spot with sevin or the elimite cream. I can now sleep without taking benadryl. I'm almost hitting sixty years of age and I have never even taken a sleeping pill in my life but that benadryl was my best friend for about 4 months. I have had a very bad feeling for about a month. Thinking that I may never get rid of these biting mites. I live with the horrible thought of having to put my precious little dogs down. That has been the worst part. The thought of having to close their little eyes forever over a damn bug has kept me awake for many nights.

We are trying not to give up but it's hard. I wish I could read just one person's account of having successfully gotten rid of these things.... that would give me hope, but as of yet I haven't found one time where people say they have got rid of these. I'm trying to stay strong and not loose hope but it's hard. Please remember me if you ever hear of anything that works and beats these things. R.

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#### MISDIAGNOSED AS SCABIES

So sorry to hear that others are experiencing the same misery. My father and I have been plagued by itching, crawling, biting sensations since May when we had visible bird mites from a nest in the dormer outside. After that, we have had dozens of thrips in the basement and on the windowsills, although visible numbers of all bugs are decreasing. An ER doc diagnosed, without scraping, scabies and we both did permethrin cream, to little avail. One brother stayed with us and got it, another didn't. Itching is usually worse at night, especially

in bed, but sometimes is just as miserable, crawling sensations in hair, crotch, etc., during the day. I often worry about spreading it to friends and family when itching is at its worst.

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#### **TIPS FOR MITE INFESTATION**

I'm just a fellow animal mite sufferer, not an expert, but I do believe they travel with you on your body and your clothes (so would probably show up and increase in numbers in due time at your new location). I definitely seemed to have them living in my bedding also. What has helped me cut down on their numbers is throwing away my mattress and fluffy cotton mattress covers and buying a memory foam mattress which I encased in a plastic cover from Walmart. Covered the box spring too. I wash my sheets daily in Borax, wear my clothes once and then seal in a plastic bag with a twistie until I wash them in borax too. I bathe twice a day (using a sulfur soap for one of the bathings). Before I go to bed at night I spray the vinyl wrapped mattress with witch hazel, Listerine, water in a spray bottle and then put my fresh sheet on it. I've also tried using a sticky tape to remove ones from my body as I feel them. I've fogged the house and replaced carpeting. I've sprayed my car a lot but can only keep their numbers down if I keep on spraying it a lot. I wish I had an all plastic interior car with no carpeting! They still crawl on my scalp at night and run around my face. I get pin pricks and mosquito looking marks on my forearm insides and my ankles. Still haven't found anything that helps my dogs much though. The mites can definitely reproduce somehow... I don't know if it's on my skin, or in cottony bedding / carpeting / upholstery. H

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#### **FEAR OF CONTAMINATION**

Just wanted to add to my experiences. I was at my son's birthday party on Sunday and was talking to some people and they all started itching their arms and foreheads and noses. Really weird. There was a light shining through the window onto us and the stuff was flying like crazy, from me to them!!! Anyhow, I backed off the conversation and walked away because I got paranoid that they would see what was happening. I am really afraid now to be near my kids. When they try to hug me or

**jump on me I back off. They say "daddy don't worry the bugs wont get us". Its really funny, I sleep in the same bed as my wife and she seems to be not the least bit affected by this stuff. You know there's only one person that knows about my problem besides my wife and kids and that is my father in law, he's a wise old Cuban man from Havana. He says that people in Cuba have this stuff. He also says only certain people are targeted by these things. He totally believes it! E.**

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### **A LIVING HELL**

**I also have been experiencing your exact same symptoms. It's been going on 1-1/2 years now; I've moved 4x the last year. It's been a living hell. I am finally working together with Dept of Agriculture and State Health Dept. I've postulated that it "could" be rodent/bird mites. I've prayed a TON, and felt like Job (old test). Now that I've found someone who's willing to TRY to help me, I have more hope than before. I'm using tape (carton sealing). I've already thrown out everything but a few items. I'm waiting on God. Did you find out what it is and how to eradicate it? My 2 cats have also been afflicted horrifically. It's been a bloom'n NIGHTMARE! I have no immune system (severe IgA deficiency). Just 2 months ago, I suddenly became very ill (while driving). I pulled over and vomited Black gunk that I perceived to be phlegm. I was flat out! The ER doctor said he saw "ulcers in the back of my throat." I can be sitting and suddenly will feel as though I am being ripped to shreds by shredded glass on my skin. Then I will notice a lesion form on the area that feels like shredded glass (or fiberglass insulation). I carry w/ me all the time a thing of tape so that I can catch anything weird. Sure enough, we've found carpet beetles, larder beetles, mites (unknown) to say a few. I've also noticed with the help of a jewelers "loop" (magnifying glass), various shapes and consistencies. At least we're making headway. Reading your testimony was like reading my own bio! Please help me if you can. Thanks so much.**

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### **SKIN TREATMENTS**

**My worst bird mite bites were the first 2 years, which were unbearable -- I almost lost my mind. I held down my job, but it almost killed me. I was not, am still am not, in a position to move, although I see that as**

**the only big help. I know it didn't solve your problem.**

**The skin treatments I have found effective I have listed: Eurax, Bite Back, witch hazel, baking soda, alcohol, Mentholatum. Avon Skin so soft lotion and stick is helpful as a repellent. Cleaning solutions: bleach; d-limonene (orange cleaner.) Dry cleaning is good for clothes. Lint rollers are good, anything not named I have tried without good results. That includes Ivermectin, sulfur. I am amazed that the same treatments do not help everyone.**

**I have never been able to defeat the mites in the environment. I have had the house sprayed and bombed numerous times. It helped me to quit using sheets and pillowcases because they cannot be reliably disinfected. I slept on top of the comforter, and I periodically replace the comforter and especially the bed pillow. I have replaced two beds in the house (which helped a lot). I even tried replacing the carpets because hard flooring was too expensive (this helped only somewhat.)**

**I sleep with long pajamas and thick socks tucked into the pajama legs. If mites in socks or pajamas persist after washing in bleach, I discard them. I never walk bare footed or bare legged in the house or with any skin exposed except my arms. I don't walk around in the dark, always turn the lights on in advance. This helps. Many other precautions, it is like living under siege. I am quite miserable about it. I know that you are too. I wonder if a good EENT doctor could help with your respiratory infestation. Have you tried? I don't think they know anything about animal mites, but maybe some germ-killing medicine sprayed up your nose might kill them or drive them out. Hang in there,  
G**

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#### **BIRD MITES FROM NEST UNDER WINDOW A/C**

**I have spent several nights till almost dawn researching how to get rid of these mites!!! It started in June when birds made a nest under my air conditioner in my bedroom window. I thought it was nice to wake up to the chirping of the baby birds. Little did I know the hell that would soon follow. I haven't slept well in weeks. Went to the dr, did blood work, everything is ok. The weird part is that my kids aren't**

**bothered , thank God! Called 4 exterminators, they won't even come out, they tell me they will die off within a month or so, well, its been almost 2 1/2 months and they are still alive. I talked to a specialist with the state who specializes in bugs. He too said they would die off without a bird host. Well, they are loving me. I have sprayed, fogged my room 3x, vacuumed. Although it does help to wash your clothes and I can't keep them in my room anymore.**

**I've been sleeping on the couch for weeks and my clothes are piled in the living room. I've also tried lotion, DEET on my body, still they bite me. I recently went on vacation across the country and they must have been in my clothes because I still itched. I'm going to try everything I can. And I certainly sympathize with all of you going thru this. I mentioned it to a few people and I think they think I'm a little looney. I'm glad to know I'm not crazy. Many thanks again!!! S.**

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#### **FAMILY AFFLICTED NOW**

**For over three years I've been chewed on by some kinds of mites. Life had been a living Hell. Been to a Dermatologist and a so-called expert in Agricultural Medicine and no one seems to know what's going on. The Derm said I needed to take a nerve pill, and the Ag Doc casually examined me in about 10 seconds and said there was nothing there. I'm at me wits end. My house is full of some kind of mites. They are almost microscopic and believe me...I have a trained eye after all this time. There are times that they are so thick on my clothing that rubbing my hand across my pants feels like fine sandpaper. The small ones go right through my clothes and the ones that can't get through, are on the surface of my clothes. When they get through, they bite with ferocity. They also get into my nose, ears, rear end and front and bite.**

**A few months ago, I had to get out...so I went to my parents. Now my poor disable mother has them and now I'm noticing that my son is showing signs of irritation around his ears and nose. My dad has allergies for the first time in his life, but I know that it's the mites. No one in my family will acknowledge that there is a problem, even after my disabled mother complained that she was being bitten. My dad sent her to the doctor, but he was unable to find anything with a 5 minute inspection of her body. Now, my mother says she wishes she would**

**simply die and get it over with...and there are times when I feel the same way. Every doctor we have seen says we have parasitosis...That is a lie...I know when something is biting me and especially when I can see them with a magnifying glass and microscope. We have sent samples to the local farm extension service and they have acknowledged the samples but insist that it's still in our heads...So... life is not life and we have no way out, it seems...If there is anyone who can offer something concrete before this becomes an epidemic, I'm begging for help. Where I work, there are also signs that others are becoming infected with this, but it seems to take months for the mite population to manifest to irritation. I don't think it's scabies, cause there is no redness or sores...only biting and itching. S.**

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#### **AFFLICTED OVER FOUR YEARS NOW**

**I cannot believe someone is finally telling our story. We have been battling these invisible demons for 4 years!. We have paid professionals to come in three times and they just say if you can't see them, you must be imagining them! They have sprayed three different cocktails but they only calm down for a little while and are back. We have thrown away all of our furniture. (my husband actually burned them in our back yard the neighbors think we are nuts!) WE have boiled everything!!!! Several times that brings relief for a few days but then they are back again! We have sprayed and sprayed with all kinds of chemicals. It's a wonder we aren't dead from that!. We are exhausted. As we speak, the new furniture we bought after we thought we got rid of the buggers is out on our porch hoping for a freeze tonight. Our mattress is out in the back yard. How can this happen? WE have one cat and we are clean people. What is the solution? Will we live with this forever? I will try the mothballs asap. How long do they have to stay in there? And what do we do about the mattress? Thanks for helping me not feel like we are so crazy!: R**

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#### **MITES FROM NESTING PIGEONS**

**Was wondering if anyone can give me some advice. I live in NYC and recently found out that pigeon mites had infested my room. To make a**

**long story short, I destroyed and cleaned the nest, put up spikes to prevent the suckers from building a new one, stripped my room bare, got an exterminator to spray, vacuumed for week with a Dyson (and cleaned it out), and finally moved back into my room after two weeks. Now, I'm waking up and feeling as if bugs are crawling and biting me constantly. I have marks on my body, but I not sure if they are bite marks or scratch marks I made inadvertently in my sleep. My skin is flaking and I'm feeling pin pricks, but I'm not seeing anything. Am I losing it? Please help**

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**DISCOURAGED**

**I am nearing a break down and feel completely alone in the human world. I have been battling these # \$ ^ & \* & bird mites?- for months now. I am so discouraged and truly afraid. I already have an unreasonable aversion to bugs--and to have them constantly stalking me is too much. My cat can see these things and is watching above my head and in certain places in the house with a terrified look- he no longer comes in unless he's really hungry. I cannot sleep here any longer and am in the process of moving(now). I don't have \$ to get an hotel for any length of time and I have no other sleeping options. These wretched creatures are traveling with me. This is awful. I have tried just about everything and I am beyond discouraged. Two things that seem to help--outside of constant cleaning are-the vinegar/alcohol mix and lavender oil slathered all over me-even in my hair. Thank you for reading--if you are here- you know that it is not something that one can talk about. I need to be in my house a lot preparing to move-it is my only job right now. Please I implore you-can anyone offer any suggestions? Thanks, P.**

**3 so I have been allotted months of futility, and nights of misery have been assigned to me. 4 When I lie down I think, 'How long before I get up?' The night drags on, and I toss till dawn. 5 My body is clothed with worms and scabs, my skin is broken and festering.**

**Job 7:3-5**

[top of page](#)

"The prayers sent to God are often answered in the kindness of strangers."



• Home

• **\*\*FAQ\*\***

• Mighty Mite

• Bird Mite Nightmare!

• A House Infested...

• Mental Anguish

• Strategies

• Forum

• **Research**

• Other Resources

• Diary

• Contact

**"Dedicated to finding effective solutions for bird mite infestations of humans and their environment, encouraging those afflicted, facilitating research and a better understanding of human parasitosis."**

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## Research & Reference Articles

The following research articles are provided to present a better understanding of bird mites affecting humans. This information can be provided to the physician, dermatologist, or the PCO; in order to more effectively treat the person and the environment when a bird mite infestation is being addressed.

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**TITLE:** Unusual Scalp Dermatitis in Humans Caused by the Mite, *Dermatophagoides* (Acarina, epidermoptidae)

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Washington Vol. 53, February, 1951, No. 1.

**AUTHOR(S):** Jay Traver, Department of Zoology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** The writer and two other members of her immediate family, all of us adult females, have been for the past several years the unwilling hosts to the mite, *Dermatophagoides*

scheremetewski Bogdanow. Since the published reports on this mite as a parasite of humans are not numerous, it seems desirable to present an account of the activities of the mite from first hand information.

Symptoms, treatment employed in the attempt to control or eradicate the mite, reaction of certain members of the medical profession to this problem, and the present status of the situation are therefore set forth.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Although this article dates to 1951, it is one of the most comprehensive research articles written on the subject of human parasitosis. It was written by a Zoologist, who was personally afflicted for many years by an acaroid mite, not previously documented as being a nuisance to humans. It has been since documented, that the mite in question has also been attributed to birds and therefore can be considered an occasional pest to humans. Because of the significance of this article, and the author's declaration concerning the lack of adequate information in the medical community and the futility in completely eradicating the mite, the complete text is being made available for viewing.

[Read the full text here.](#)

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**TITLE:** Bird-Mite Infestation

**JOURNAL/DATE:** New England Journal Of Medicine, April, 20, 2006

**AUTHOR(S):** Kong TK, To WK

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** A 46-year-old woman and her husband had their sleep disturbed by pruritus, waking up to find similar, itchy papular lesions over their finger webs (Panel A), axillae, groins, and buttocks. They found small (less than 1 mm) mites (Panel B) moving across their skin, which light microscopy revealed to be *Ornithonyssus bursa* (Panel C), bloodsucking bird mites commonly found in pigeons' nests. Their pruritus improved after the application of crotamiton to their lesions and after the pigeon's nest hidden under the air conditioner above their

bedroom was cleaned.

**IMPLICATIONS:** The lesions are often mistaken for scabies, and so an accurate assessment is needed. The physician can better make the diagnosis with a skin scraping or light microscopy, not just a visual examination. Sleep disturbance is often the tell-tale sign of bird mites.

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**TITLE:** Human Infestation With Bird Mites In Wollongong

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Communicable Diseases Intelligence - Vol 27 No 2  
June 2003

**AUTHOR(S):** Charles R Watson

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** This is a report of a case of bird mite infestation which occurred in Wollongong in mid-December 1996. The individual suffered hundreds of bites, most of which were marked by itchy red papules 3-4 mm in diameter. Tiny mobile parasites (< 1 mm) collected from the skin and adjacent bedroom wall were identified as bird mites from the family Gamasidae, most probably from the genus *Ornithonyssus*. The source of the infestation was a starling nest under the eaves adjacent to the bedroom.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Importance for early detection and identification to achieve success with bird mites. The author was an Australian entomologist.

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**TITLE:** Dermatitis in humans associated with the mites *Pyemotes tritici*, *Dermanyssus gallinae*, *Ornithonyssus bacoti* and *Androlaelaps casalis* in Israel

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Medical and Veterinary Entomology Volume 16 -  
December 2002

**AUTHOR(S):** S. Rosen, I. Yeruham and Y. Braverman

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Multiple erythematous papules accompanied by severe pruritus were observed in humans bitten by the mites (Acari) *Pyemotes tritici* (Newport) (Pyemotidae), *Dermanyssus gallinae* (De Geer) (Dermanyssidae), *Ornithonyssus bacoti* Hirst (Macronyssidae) and *Androlaelaps casalis* (Berlese) (Laelapidae). Eight case histories are presented and the impact of these species on human health is discussed.

**IMPLICATIONS:** This report is from Israel. Bird mite infestations of human occur throughout the world, and have been documented in many foreign medical journals.

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**TITLE:** Avian Mite Dermatitis

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Clin Exp Dermatol. 2000 Mar;25(2):129-31

**AUTHOR(S):** Orton DI, Warren LJ, Wilkinson JD., Department of Dermatology, Amersham Hospital, Amersham, UK.

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Avian mite infestation is a rare cause of pruritic dermatoses in humans. The mites spend the majority of their life cycle on the avian host but may be transmitted to man as a result of direct contact and also through airborne spread. We describe a case of infestation with the Northern Fowl Mite (*Ornithonyssus sylviarum*) from an abandoned birds nest in the roof of a patients home. This caused a pruritic erythematous papular eruption on exposed sites that settled with topical steroids. We discuss the diagnosis and range of clinical manifestations produced by avian mites.

**IMPLICATIONS:** This report is from England. Documents airborne transmission of these mites. Some have reported they initially received mite bites while doing outside yardwork/landscaping near trees where birds have nested.

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**TITLE:** Avian mite bites acquired from a new source--pet gerbils: report of 2 cases and review of the literature.

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Arch Dermatol. 2001 Feb;137(2):167-70

**AUTHOR(S):** Lucky AW, et al.

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Cutaneous manifestations of avian mite bites are not well recognized by physicians or patients. Clinical signs and symptoms are usually caused by bites from avian mites that have infested domestic poultry or birds nesting in or near human habitation. This report details 2 cases of pruritic papules acquired from avian mites that had infested pet gerbils and reviews the dermatologic literature about avian mites. **OBSERVATIONS:** An 11-year-old boy and an unrelated 10-year-old girl each had mysterious, pruritic papules for many months before their pet gerbils were found to be infested with *Ornithonyssus sylviarum* (the northern fowl mite) and *Dermanyssus gallinae* (the chicken mite), respectively. Symptoms resolved when the gerbils were removed from the home. **CONCLUSIONS:** Because infestation of pet gerbils with avian mites has never been reported, cases of avian mite bites and dermatitis may have gone unrecognized or misdiagnosed. Inquiry about ownership of pet gerbils may be helpful in patients with mysterious bites.

**TEXT EXTRACT:** "The second reported case, from Colorado, involved a 10-year-old girl with no prior history of skin complaints who suddenly developed an asymmetrically distributed, pruritic eruption on her trunk and extremities. Her teacher had recently given her and other students pet gerbils to care for over spring break, and she also had a pet dog. In contrast to the first case, repeated examinations of both the dog and gerbils failed to reveal any arthropod or mite infestation. However, inspection of the child's room at night revealed dark mites visible on her furniture, which were identified by a veterinary parasitologist as *D gallinae*. In contrast to *O sylviarum* (NFM), *D gallinae* takes a blood meal on its host nocturnally, then drops off into nest material. Consequently,

repeat inspection of infested animals and humans usually fails to reveal the parasite, making diagnosis challenging."

**IMPLICATIONS:** Documents human mite problems from pet gerbils, which also had been infested with bird mites. Demonstrates how bird mites are adept and can feed on many types of mammals, and it is no longer just birds. Some have reported that their pets have been constantly bitten once the home was infested.

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**TITLE:** Persistent scalp infestation by *Dermanyssus gallinae* in an Emilian country-woman. [Article in Italian]

**JOURNAL:** Dipartimento di Sanita Pubblica Veterinaria, Universita di Bologna, Via Tolara di Sopra 50, 40064 Ozzano Emilia, BO, Italy.

**AUTHOR(S):** Pampiglione S, Pampiglione G, Pagani M, Rivasi F.

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** A case of persistent infestation of the scalp due to *Dermanyssus gallinae*.--Infestation due to *Dermanyssus gallinae*, the common red mite of poultry, in a country-woman aged 69 years from Crevalcore (Emilia-Romagna region, Northern Italy), is described. The case was unusual either for its location, the scalp, and for its persistence, 9 months. Specimens of the mite were also found in the henhouse adjacent to the patient's house.

**IMPLICATIONS:** This report is from Italy. Although the authors state it is unusual for its persistence (9 months), many have reported much longer problems from chronic bird mite infestations.

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**TITLE:** Parasitic pruritus: bird mite zoonosis [Article in Dutch]

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Maria-Ziekenhuis, afd. Dermatologie, Tilburg.1996 Dec 21;140(51):2550-2

**AUTHOR(S):** van Dooren-Greebe RJ.

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** In three women with persistent pruritus, aged 49, 28 and 4 years, infestation with the bird or chicken mite (*Dermanyssus gallinae*) was demonstrated. These mites live in narrow openings and cracks close to the bird housing during the daytime. At night, they attack the birds on whose blood they live. When their host disappears, they may attack men, notably when their breeding places are in or near houses. Mite bites result in urticarial and itchy papulovesicular skin eruptions. Treatment of bird mite infestation consists of removing the old nests. Treatment of the patients is symptomatic. Epizoonosis belongs in the differential diagnosis of pruritus; infestation with bird or chicken mites is one of the possibilities.

**IMPLICATIONS:** The article states that treatment of the patient is 'symptomatic', which means they will be treated for the skin dermatitis. This does not always clear the problem in the environment though, even when the nest is removed, as many have found out.

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**TITLE:** Avian Mite Dermatitis

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Pediatrics. 1996 May;97(5):743-5.

**AUTHOR(S):** Baselga E, Drolet BA, Esterly NB. Department of Dermatology, Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee 53226

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** This study describes two cases of avian mite dermatitis -- a little-known but widespread condition. A college student presented with acute, severe pruritus and generalized wheals. When she returned for a follow-up visit, she reported that her brother had similar skin lesions, and, upon examination, both she and her brother had widespread erythematous papules, many with central papules. Examination of a sample showed an 8-legged mite consistent with an avian mite. After carefully cleaning her room and bedclothes, her symptoms resolved. She remained asymptomatic until the following

spring. The presumed source of the mites was a pigeon's nest found under the eaves of the house.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Documentation of human mite infestation, which the authors state is "a little known but widespread condition". Confirming what many have learned the hard way.

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**TITLE:** Ornithonyssus (Acari: Macronyssidae) mite dermatitis in poultry field-workers in Almarg, Qalyobiya governorate.

**JOURNAL/DATE:** J Egypt Soc Parasitol. 2005 Apr;35(1):213-22.

**AUTHOR(S):** Mazyad SA, Abel El-Kadi M., Research and Training Center on Vectors of Diseases, Ain Shams Universty, Cairo 11566, Egypt.

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Cutaneous manifestations of bird and rat mite infestation in man are not easily recognized by physicians or patients. Clinical signs and symptoms are developed secondary to bites of mites that have infested rats, domestic poultry or birds nesting in or near human habitation and comes into contact with man. This study details 4 cases of pruritic dermatitis developed in four field workers in poultry farms in Al-Marg district, Qalyobia governorate, Egypt. The zoonotic species of Ornithoysus sp., (Family Macronyssidae) was isolated from all samples collected from patients' habitat and the role played by Ornithonyssus mites in causing dermatitis in man was discussed.

**IMPLICATIONS:** This report from Egypt documents human dermatitis from bird and rodent mites. Although many dermatologists and doctors are unaware of its occurrence, the person who is bothered by them should let the physician know that it is fully documented in the medical literature from many countries. Oftentimes medical personnel think that they should see the mite on the skin and that is how they would make the diagnosis, but many times that is not possible. Even vets often think that they will see the mites on the animal, but usually they will need to rely on the symptoms and the owner's own story to make the diagnosis.

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**TITLE:** Occupational otitis externa in chicken catchers.

**JOURNAL/DATE:** J Laryngol Otol. 1997 Apr;111(4):366-7

**AUTHOR(S):** Rossiter A., Department of Occupational Health, Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital (Heavitree), UK.

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Otitis externa (ear infection) is only occasionally occupational in origin and infestations of the ear are even less common. Two cases of occupational otitis externa due to infestation with *Dermanyssus gallinae*, the red poultry mite, are reported occurring in poultry workers.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Although this abstract is short, it documents that bird mites do infest the ears of those affected by them. Many people have reported problems from bird mites invading the ears, nostrils, and even eyes, especially at night. This is also a problem for pets in the infested home.

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**TITLE:** An Infestation of a Human Habitation by *Dermanyssus Gallinae* (Degeer, 1778) (Acarina: Dermanyssidae) in New York City Resulting in Sanguisugent Attacks upon the Occupants

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Am. J. Trop. Med. Hyg., 7(6), 1958, pp. 627-629

**AUTHOR(S):** Roger W. Williams, School of Public Health and Administrative Medicine, Columbia University

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Although a marked clinical dermatitis is common in some individuals that become closely associated with the bird mite, *Dermanyssus gallinae*, the literature presents little evidence that this mite will ingest human blood and many investigators feel that this species will never ingest it. The invasion of a New York City apartment by

these mites resulting in attacks on the occupants is described. The finding of mammalian erythrocytes in the digestive tract of mites collected from this apartment, some of which were taken from the bed of the occupants, as well as the appearance of fresh blood splotches on the bed sheets resulting from crushed mites which had recently fed, offer some factual evidence that *D. gallinae* may, on occasion at least, partake of human blood.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Although an older research article (1958), it clearly documented human blood was ingested by *D. Gallinae*. Which was contrary to what many had previously thought; that bird mites do not feed on humans, only birds.

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**TITLE:** Acaroid mite, intestinal and urinary acariasis

**JOURNAL/DATE:** World J Gastroenterol 2003;9(4):874-877

**AUTHOR(S):** Chao-Pin Li, Yu-Bao Cui, Jian Wang, Qing-Gui Yang, Ye Tian

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Various species of mites often infest stored foodstuffs and various drugs, and cause losses in food and drug products, especially in humid and warm area[1-9]. They are small creatures of about half a millimeter in body size and creamy white in color, proving difficult to be detected from drugs and food products. Therefore, the incidence of various forms of human acariasis presumably caused by the ingestion of mite-infested food is unusually high in China[10]. In this study we investigate the epidemiological characteristics and pathogenic mite species of intestinal and urinary acariasis in individuals with different occupations in Anhui Province. Twenty-two species, from 9 families of mites were separated and identified.

**TEXT EXTRACT:** "Acaroid mite can survive in many environments including the storehouse, human and animal bodies. Its infestation in human can cause acariasis in several organs including the lung, intestine

and urinary tract[17-26]. Apparently the pathogenic mites come from environment. Regarding the transmission path, the following possibilities have been proposed. First, the insects may enter the urinary tract by crawling from vulva. Second, they may enter the body through skin and reach urinary tract in some way. Third, mites in respiratory or alimentary system may enter the blood circulation, and reach kidney and urinary tract[46-50]. Acaroid in human urinary system may damage urethral epithelia, for the mites are good at digging. Furthermore, they can also invade loose connective tissue and small blood vessel in urinary tract, and caused an ulcer."

**IMPLICATIONS:** Significant research that demonstrates the viability of acaroid mites to thrive in humans. These ectoparasites (environmental mites) were not previously known to infest humans; but thorough medical diagnostic tests showed the survivability of mites inside humans. Acariasis should always be a consideration for a longstanding infestation from parasites that need blood to survive; such as with bird mites.

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**TITLE:** The Epidemiology, Diagnosis, Management, and Prevention of Ectoparasitic Diseases in Travelers

**JOURNAL/DATE:** J Travel Med 2006; 13: 100–111

**AUTHOR(S):** James H . Diaz , MD, Dr PH Schools of Public Health and Medicine, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA, USA

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Ectoparasitic diseases have been reported in travelers returning from both developed and developing nations. Ectoparasitic diseases afflict the skin and its appendages and orifices, especially the scalp, facial, and pubic hairs; external ears; nares; orbits and eyelids; and genitourinary and rectal orifices. Like endoparasites, ectoparasites may be either obligatory parasites, which need to feed on human hosts to complete their life cycles, or facultative parasites, which prefer to feed on nonhuman hosts and infest humans only as accidental

or dead-end hosts.

TEXT EXTRACT: "As noted by McGarry and colleagues in Liverpool, the ubiquitous poultry red mite (UK), or red chicken mite (United States), *Dermanyssus gallinae*, caused most of the mite bites in a descriptive analysis of arthropod dermatoses in the UK over the period 1994 to 2000. The red chicken mite can also cause a pruritic dermatitis usually on the backs of the hands and forearms in poultry workers and can transmit both St. Louis encephalitis and western equine encephalitis. The rat mite, *Ornithonyssus bacoti*, is also ubiquitous in the temperate areas of Europe and the Americas, can cause a papulovesicular dermatitis in stockyard and warehouse workers, and can transmit endemic typhus caused by *R typhi*...Some of the most common ectoparasites, principally flea, lice, and mite infestations, have become increasingly resistant to the safest insecticides, such as the natural pyrethrins and synthetic pyrethroids."

IMPLICATIONS: Medical research which documents that humans can become infested by ectoparasitic mites that normally would infest only other types of mammals; such as birds or rodents. And also the risk for the various disease causing pathogens that mites transmit. The article also concludes that the weak pyrethrins are ineffective for parasite control.

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TITLE: Effects of Temperature and Humidity on Oviposition, Molting, and Longevity of *Dermanyssus gallinae* (Acari: Dermanyssidae)

JOURNAL/DATE: Journal of Medical Entomology, Volume 36, Number 1, January 1999, pp. 68-72(5) Entomological Society of America

AUTHOR(S): Nordenfors H.; Höglund J.; Uggla A.

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY: The juvenile development and survival of *Dermanyssus gallinae* (De Geer) kept in vitro at different temperatures and humidity were investigated to obtain biological baseline data for a

Swedish population. Individual females, eggs, larvae, and protonymphs were observed with regard to egg-production, duration of various stages, and longevity when kept at different temperatures and relative humidities (RH). Female mites laid eggs at temperatures between 5 and 45°C with the highest numbers laid at 20°C and 70% RH, but development to larvae and protonymphs was only observed at temperatures ranging from 20 to 25°C. The average duration of oviposition varied from 1.0 to 3.2 d within the temperature range 20–45°C but was gradually increased to 28 d at 5°C. Specimens survived for up to 9 mo without access to food when kept in the temperature range of 5–25°C. Temperatures >45°C and at -20°C were found to be lethal. Longevity was similar for females and protonymphs kept at 30 and 45% RH, but it was enhanced at 70 and 90% RH for protonymphs. This study showed that *D. gallinae* can survive for a long time without feeding if the microclimate is suitable, but it does not thrive at low relative humidities and at temperature extremes. This indicates that changing of the abiotic conditions in infested poultry houses could be a possible measure to reduce mite populations.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Research that demonstrates how resilient bird mites can be with fluctuating temperatures and humidity levels; and the ability to survive up to 9 months without a host. They thrive with higher relative humidity (RH) levels of 70 to 90% and moderate temperatures, as can be found in a human environment. They can survive in cold temperatures to -20°C (-4°F), which implies that they can make it through a typical North American winter.

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**TITLE:** Influence of heat and vibration on the movement of the northern fowl mite (Acari: Macronyssidae)

**JOURNAL/DATE:** J Med Entomol. 2004 Sep;41(5):865-72.

**AUTHOR(S):** Owen JP, Mullens BA., Department of Entomology, University of California

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Heat and vibration are common host-generated cues that ectoparasites use to orient to hosts. Three experiments evaluated effects of heat and vibration on the movement of northern fowl mite, *Ornithonyssus sylviarum* (Canestrini & Fanzago). Individual arrested mites in an isolation chamber always initiated movement (walking) after substrate vibration (7.8-min walking duration), but only initiated movement 50% of the time (2.8-min walking duration) upon exposure to a 3 degrees C heat fluctuation. Heat fluctuation in combination with vibration extended the period of activity by approximately 50% (11.6-min walking duration) compared with activity initiated by vibration alone. Mites with longer time off-host moved for shorter durations. In a choice test, individual mites consistently moved closer to a 35 degrees C heat source 1 or 6 mm away, but not to a heat source 11 mm away. In a circular arena, mites were able to orient accurately to a 35 degrees C heat source and reached the arena edge almost 4 times faster (11.2 s) than mites without a heat source (41.2 s). These results suggest that northern fowl mite is capable of directed thermo-orientation, as well as modulation of activity depending on the type of sensory information perceived. The adaptive significance of this orientation for a "permanent" ectoparasite is discussed.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Demonstrates how mites use heat and vibration cues in the environment. This knowledge can often be used to help with a mite infestation. For example, a heat source can be used in a room to attract mites with glue traps to catch them. Some have used a hot water bottle or portable heater for this purpose. Even an IR heat lamp can be used to attract mites.

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**TITLE:** (unknown)

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Entomology research article which demonstrated that *D. Gallinae* was able to revert to an earlier morphological state in order to not be rejected by the hosts immune system.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Shows the amount of variability in bird mites and their ability to adapt to different hosts in order to survive. This could possibly explain why those afflicted for many years are not able to see the parasite, as they remain in an earlier state and are much smaller, though more insidious.

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**TITLE:** Susceptibilities of northern fowl mite, *Ornithonyssus sylviarum* (Acarina: Macronyssidae), and chicken mite, *Dermanyssus gallinae* (Acarina: Dermanyssidae), to selected acaricides.

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Exp Appl Acarol. 1991 Dec;13(2):137-42

**AUTHOR(S):** Fletcher MG, et al.

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** The relative toxicities of ten acaricides to northern fowl mite, *Ornithonyssus sylviarum* (Canestrini and Fanzago), and the chicken mite, *Dermanyssus gallinae* (De Geer), were determined simultaneously by holding the mites inside disposable glass Pasteur pipettes previously immersed in acetone solutions of various concentrations (w/v) of technical grade acaricides. The LC90s (parts per million) of the acaricides after 24 h exposure for the northern fowl mite and the chicken mite, respectively, were: bendiocarb (13.1, 0.18), tetrachlorvinphos (14.5, 4.07), carbaryl (15.0, 0.83), pirimiphos methyl (18.3, 2.03), permethrin (23.1, 8.46), lambda cyhalothrin (80.7, 11.4), dichlorvos (252.8, 3.75), malathion (238.4, 6.59), amitraz (6741, 9430) and fenvalerate (greater than 10,000, 60.2). After 48 h exposure there were only slight increases in mortalities of both species except for increased mortalities for the northern fowl mite with lambda cyhalothrin, amitraz and fenvalerate, and for the chicken mite with amitraz.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Demonstrates which chemicals are effective miticides. The first number reflects NFM mortality, the second is *D. Gallinae*). Fenvalerate is a fairly effective miticide, but it is no longer available. It has been replaced with Esfenvalerate. Keep in mind that miticides have to directly contact mites to be effective; there is very little vapor effect

that will produce good results. Most OTC bug sprays are of such low concentrations of active ingredients as to not be effective. However, a PCO would have access to stronger chemical solutions. Some OTC bug sprays will state that they will kill for three months or so. That may be for roaches and ants, but it is not applicable to mites.

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**TITLE:** Acaricide resistance in northern fowl mite (*Ornithonyssus sylviarum*) populations on caged layer operations in Southern California

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Poult Sci. 2004 Mar;83(3):365-74.

**AUTHOR(S):** Mullens BA, Velten RK, Hinkle NC, Kuney DR, Szijj CE.,  
Department of Entomology, University of California Cooperative  
Extension

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Southern California caged layer operations were visited over 3 yr. Northern fowl mites from 26 field populations were tested for acaricide resistance using a capillary pipette and glass dish bioassay. One was a susceptible field population with no pesticide exposure for over 30 yr (reference site for resistance ratio calculation). Technical and commercial formulations of malathion, carbaryl (Sevin), permethrin, and a commercial formulation of tetrachlorvinphos/dichlorvos (Ravap) were tested. Malathion did not have high activity for mites relative to other materials, but resistance to both technical and commercial formulations was low (< 5x). Resistance to other materials was moderate to extreme. Frequency of carbaryl resistance (> 10x) was higher with the commercial (88%) than the technical material (41%); 19% of the populations had resistance > 100x to commercial carbaryl. Frequency of Ravap resistance (> 10x) was 68%; 8% of populations had resistance > 100x. Frequency of permethrin resistance (> 10x) was 72% for the technical material and 88% for the commercial formulation. Extreme permethrin resistance (> 1,000x) was observed in 56 and 50% of mite populations assayed using the technical and commercial formulations, respectively. Among sites, resistance to permethrin was uncorrelated with resistance to other chemicals, suggesting a different

resistance mechanism. Resistance to carbaryl and Ravap was highly correlated [ $r = 0.76$  at the LC50 level (concentrations estimated to be lethal to 50% of the test population) and  $r = 0.99$  at the LC95 level], suggesting a common resistance mechanism. Producers currently depend completely on pesticides to control mite infestations. Mite resistance to registered materials emphasizes the need for integrated control measures.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Research that further demonstrates how ineffective the pyrethrin and permethrin based chemicals are against bird mites. It is important that the PCO be aware of these facts before treating the home.

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**TITLE:** Collembola (Springtails) (Arthropoda: Hexapoda: Entognatha) Found In Scrapings From Individuals Diagnosed With Delusory Parasitosis

**JOURNAL/DATE:** J. New York Entomol. Soc. 112(1):87-95, 2004

**AUTHOR(S):** Michael Crutcher, MD, et al

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** Twenty individuals diagnosed with delusory parasitosis participated in a single site clinical study under the auspices of the National Pediculosis Association (NPA) and the Oklahoma State Department of Health. The objective of this study was to determine if there were any common factors in skin scrapings collected from this population. These individuals, whose symptoms were originally attributed to lice or scabies, were part of a larger group reporting symptoms of stinging/biting and/or crawling to the NPA. Multiple skin scrapings from each person were microscopically examined. Any and all fields of view that appeared incongruous to normal human skin were digitally photographed. When the photographic images were initially evaluated, no common factor was identified. However, more extensive scrutiny using imaging software revealed evidence of Collembola in 18 of the 20 participants.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Research which confirmed that parasitosis was not

delusional in a group of people that had been labeled as DOP; but this could only be verified by specialists who knew what to look for. No one in the non-symptom group had any of the parasites, but 18 of 20 in the symptom group did indeed have the skin parasites.

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**TITLE:** The poultry red mite, *Dermanyssus gallinae*, a potential vector of *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae* causing erysipelas in hens.

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Med Vet Entomol. 2003 Jun;17(2):232-4

**AUTHOR(S):** Chirico J, Eriksson H, Fossum O, Jansson D. Department of Parasitology (SWEPAR), National Veterinary Institute, SE-751 89 Uppsala, Sweden.

**ABSTRACT:** Erysipelas is a bacterial disease caused by *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae*, which may infect swine as well as several other species of mammals and birds, including domestic fowl. In poultry, erysipelas may cause sudden high mortality due to septicemia. This communication describes the first isolation of *E. rhusiopathiae* from the haematophagous poultry red mite, *Dermanyssus gallinae* DeGeer (Acari: Dermanyssidae), that was collected on three farms where hen erysipelas was diagnosed. The bacteria were isolated from the integument as well as from the interior of the mites. Serotypes 1a and 1b of *E. rhusiopathiae* found in the mites corresponded with those isolated from the diseased birds. These findings imply that *D. gallinae* is a potential vector of *E. rhusiopathiae*. The current lack of effective measures to control *D. gallinae* causes recurring mite problems in poultry facilities once afflicted by this parasite. Consequently, mites containing *E. rhusiopathiae* may act as reservoir hosts of this bacterium, allowing it to persist in the poultry house between flock cycles as a source of infection for the replacement pullets. The zoonotic potentials of both *E. rhusiopathiae* and *D. gallinae* should also be considered.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Documents bird mites as a vector of pathogens to host mammals. Also, this research states "The current lack of effective

measures to control *D. Gallinae* causes recurring mite problems in poultry facilities once afflicted by this parasite". Some farmers have had to resort to burning heavily infested coops as the mite population could not be curtailed. It is unfortunate that human hosts do not have this same option available!!!

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**TITLE:** Diarrhea and acaroid mites: a clinical study.

**JOURNAL/DATE:** World J Gastroenterol. 2003 Jul;9(7):1621-4.

**AUTHOR(S):** Li CP, Cui YB, Wang J, Yang QG, Tian Y. Department of Etiology and Immunology, School of Medicine, Anhui University of Science Technology, Huainan 232001, Anhui Province, China.

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** To explore the characteristics of diarrhea caused by acaroid mites. **METHODS:** Acaroid mites in fresh stools of 241 patients with diarrhea were separated by flotation in saturated saline. Meanwhile, skin prick test, total IgE and mite-specific IgE were detected in all patients. **RESULTS:** The total positive rate of mites in stool samples of the patients was 17.01 % (41/241), the positive rates of mites in male and female patients were 15.86 % (23/145) and 18.75 % (18/96), respectively, without significant difference ( $P > 0.05$ ). The percentage of skin prick test as "+++", "++", "+", "+/-" and "-" was 9.13 % (22/241), 7.47 % (18/241), 5.81 % (14/241), 4.98 % (12/241) and 72.61 % (175/241), respectively. The serum levels of total IgE, mite-specific IgE in patients with and without mites in stool samples were (165.72 $\pm$ 78.55) IU/ml, (132.44 $\pm$ 26.80) IU/ml and (145.22 $\pm$ 82.47) IU/ml, (67.35 $\pm$ 45.28) IU/ml, respectively, with significant difference ( $P < 0.01$ ). The positive rate of mites in stool samples in staffs working in traditional Chinese medicine storehouses or rice storehouses (experimental group) was 26.74 % (23/86), which was significantly higher than that (11.61 %, 18/155) in people engaged in other professions ( $\chi^2=8.97$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ).

**CONCLUSION:** Acaroid mites cause diarrhea and increase serum levels of total IgE and mite-specific IgE of patients, and the prevalence of diarrhea caused by acaroid mites is associated with occupations rather

than the gender of patients.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Further research documenting human acariasis from mites previously classified as 'ectoparasites' in the textbooks. It is important for clinical researchers to 'think outside the box' when it comes to the variability of mites in order to survive in a changing environment. People with acariasis will often show increased levels of mite-specific IgE and this can be used by the physician to verify the person's claim of parasitosis and acariasis. (Other tests can include IgG levels for parasites.)

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**TITLE:**A new species of parasitic mites of the genus *Syringophiloidus* Kethley 1970 (Acari: Syringophilidae) from the barn swallow *Hirundo rustica* Linnaeus, 1758

**JOURNAL/DATE:** Parasite. 2003; 10(1):17-20 (ISSN: 1252-607X)

**AUTHOR(S):** Skoracki M; Møller AP; Tryjanowski P Department of Animal Morphology, A. Mickiewicz University, 28 Czerwca 1956/198, 61-485 Poznań, Poland.

**ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:** A new quill mite species *Syringophiloidus hirundinis* (Acari: Syringophilidae) is described from the Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*. The species *Syringophiloidus hirundinis* had a prevalence of 17.1% in the two outermost tail feathers (N = 208 adult Barn Swallows) during the breeding season of the Barn Swallow host. Intensity of infestation was 9.7 adult mites per pair of infested tail feathers. The sex ratio was highly biased towards females, with only 7.5% of all individuals being males (20:3).

**IMPLICATIONS:** Research article which shows how our current knowledge of bird mites is still evolving, including the classifying of species previously unknown. It is probable that this species has been around a long time but was not yet identified or documented in the literature.

[top of page](#)

"The prayers sent to God are often answered in the kindness of strangers."



birdmites.org  
education & research

- Home
- **\*\*FAQ\*\***
- Mighty Mite
- Bird Mite Nightmare!
- A House Infested...
- Mental Anguish
- Strategies
- Forum
- Research
- **Other Resources**
- Diary
- Contact

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## Other Resources & Websites Of Interest

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[TV news report of a bird mite infestation Pt 1.](#)

[TV news report of a bird mite infestation Pt 2.](#)

WRAL Raleigh, NC TV news report of one family's battle with a home infestation of bird mites. Including a follow up report several weeks later on successfully eradicating the bird mites from the home.

<http://www.whatsthatbug.com/worst.html>

"The Worst Bug Story Ever", is one young lady's account of dealing with a bird mite infestation.

<http://mitescentral.blogspot.com/>

Informative website blog for dealing with parasitic mite

**infestations.**

**<http://www.buginfo.com/articles/pestbirds.cfm>**

**Information on nuisance birds and suggestions on how to keep them away from the home or apartment building.**

**<http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Factsheets/pdfs/acariasis.pdf>**

**Entomology website with information regarding mite acariasis, including some treatment options.**

**<http://ipmworld.umn.edu/chapters/ware.htm>**

**Comprehensive information on the different chemical insecticides currently available.**

**<http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov>**

**The NIH database of household chemical products. Provides list of active ingredients for insecticide products.**

**[Morgellons video clip](#)**

**Informative TV news report regarding an infectious skin disorder know as Morgellons, often attributed to mites and other unknown pathogens.**

**<http://www.calvetsupply.com>**

**Resource for some of the non-prescription animal products mentioned for a mite infestation.**

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• Home

• **\*\*FAQ\*\***

• Mighty Mite

• Bird Mite Nightmare!

• A House Infested...

• Mental Anguish

• Strategies

• Forum

• Research

• Other Resources

• **Diary**

• Contact

"It is not any **ONE** thing that will get rid of these cursed mites, just a lot of hard work...daily." TM

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## A Day In The Life...

**24-hour diary of a bird mite sufferer; including tips on what is done to help get through the day and night.**

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**5:00 am.** I am rudely awakened and up before dawn with some biting on my legs and back, and a crawling sensation around my nose and mouth, as well as legs. I quickly grab the lint roller and use it on my skin and then vacuum under the sheets, and then spray the bed linens with the orange cleaner that I keep in a spray bottle. (I recently found a good cleaner/degreaser with real orange oil from the Dollar Store, it is as effective on the skin and less expensive compared to the enzyme cleaners.) Then off to the bathroom and gargle with Listerine, and to wash up.

**7:00 am.** A lot of tossing and turning and very little sleep until now. I again vacuum under the bed sheets and try to get some sleep. The sun is coming up and the room

is brighter now and there is a lot less mite activity and so am able to get a few hours sleep since I don't go in to work until the afternoon. On rainy, humid days, the problem seems to be aggravated, so I am grateful for a sunny morning.



The bedframe has Victor's fly contact paper wrapped around the legs to prevent the mites from crawling up from the floor.

**10:00 am.** Up and out of bed. I gag and then cough up white phlegm, which seems to happen most every morning since the mite infestation started. I vacuum the bed linens, and put them in a sealed trash bag with mothballs. Spray the vinyl mattress protectors and bed frame with either a good bug spray or orange cleaner. I then hop in the shower. I use a loofah scrub pad with a pouch and pour some Epsom salt in it, and then scrub real good using either Denorex coal tar shampoo or Sulfodene. These products seem to help a lot for itchy skin. I apply lots of Gold Bond medicated talc all over. I then spray the shower down with a bleach/water solution from a spray bottle.

At least once a day I have to spray in between my toes as they get real itching and scaly. It is an ongoing fungal

infection that includes calluses and very itchy skin lesions. I have had this off and on since the mite problem started, and I never had this before. I find that Miconazol Nitrate, an anti-fungal, works better than anything else. The best is the tincture, available by prescription, but the Lotramin AF powder spray works good also, and this is what I end up using at times. I also will soak my feet in a pan of white vinegar and this really helps when they are itching a lot.



The itchy, crusty lesions and broken skin between the toes. I have been dealing with these fungal infections off and on since the bird mite infestation started. These lesions often take a long time to heal.

**10:30 am.** I retrieve my clean clothes from the plastic bins which also contains mothballs. Iron all my clothes for today with a steam iron on the high heat setting and plenty of steam. (The Black & Decker SteamXpress is a very good steam iron.) I put Bounce fabric sheets in my underclothes and socks while getting dressed. (On days when they are really bothering me I even wear a dog flea & tick collar around my neck.)

**11:30 am.** I vacuum the car seats with a Dust Buster

before heading off to work today. I keep the Bounce sheets tucked in the car seats and mite dusting powder in the carpet. I open the sunroof and this helps some also. On humid, overcast days, they can really be a problem in the car. On sunny and hot days, it isn't too bad. I keep a small bottle of mouthwash in my car and use this before going into work.

**1:00 pm.** At work I briefly exit to the bathroom to wash up and spritz my skin with a small spray bottle that I keep handy for when the mites are bothering me. They tend to be less active at this time of day, which I am grateful for. In the office I always try to sit on only wooden or leather chairs. I find that the upholstered chairs can become infested too easily.

Since I often have to be around others at work in close proximity, I try not to stand real close to them when talking. I have found from experience that some people are bothered by these mites, and will start to scratch or sneeze when I am near them. I know they are in my respiratory system at times, and that is why I try to avoid close contact when talking. What a freakin nightmare this is!



My trusty lint roller is used daily. I keep one in the car, and one at work, as well as those I use at home. I have found that this brand seems to work best.

**5:30 pm.** On the way home I stop at a car wash and use the heavy duty vacuum to clean the carpet and headliner. This is done about once a week when the mites are active. I then puff some mite dusting powder in the carpet. I am sure glad that I have the option of only working part-time on my job, as it got to be too much of a mental and physical strain working full-time and not getting much sleep at night.

**7:30 pm.** I sit at the computer for a while to take care of some emails. I use a wooden chair to sit on. After about 20

minutes or so I feel the mites crawling on my legs and so grab either the lint roller or spray bottle. Some days I light a stick of sandalwood incense near the desk and this helps to keep them from swarming. If they get real bad I prefer to use the Ortho Roach spray with esfenvalerate or else the Hot Shot Ultra, and spray around the computer desk and chair real good.



The window a/c unit is sealed at the bottom with aluminum foil and duct tape, to prevent birds from nesting underneath.

**8:00 pm.** I sit in my favorite lawn chair while watching TV tonight. No more comfortable couch or recliner for me. It is a constant reminder of just how pervasive a mite infestation is in ones life. After about a half hour or so, I can feel the mite activity increase. I grab my trusty lint roller to use on my skin and clothing and I also vacuum the chair. It is getting dark now and they seem to be much more active at night.

**9:30 pm.** I get out the carpet vac and then thoroughly vacuum the carpet. I then puff some mite dusting powder

into the carpet. That way I don't have to vacuum as often. I tape the end of the vac bag and put this in the freezer until I need to use the vac again. Doing laundry tonight, as I do most nights. I find that if I use a couple of cups of bleach to wash my bed linens, it helps to reduce mite activity significantly at night. Other times I will use the ammonia and Epsom salt. I then dry my clothes on high heat with a couple of Bounce fabric sheets. I then place the clean linens in a clean trash bag with mothballs until I put them on the bed later.

**11:00 pm.** Well, time for my night-time routine before bed. I sometimes have to wipe down the bedroom walls and ceiling with a Swifter wet mop with some bug spray on it. I then place the clean bed linens on. All my dirty clothes go into a heavy-duty trash bag with mothballs. I put on my flip-flops and shorts and head to the bathroom.



Some of the better products I have used recently, which seem to help. These are found at Home Depot with the household cleaning products.

**11:15 pm.** Tonight I will soak in a hot tub. I found that Batherapy Sport with menthol, eucalyptus and sulfur is very effective in hot water. I also add two cups of Epsom salt to the bath water. I soak for at least 15 minutes and then use a loofah scrub pad with a bar of coal tar soap (available at health food stores). I liberally apply menthol talc all over after drying off.

**11:45 pm.** I have a bed-time regimen that I have to

follow in order to get a few hours of sleep. I put in silicone earplugs, and I often wear swimming goggles to cover my eyes. I put anti-fungal lotion or sulfur/Vaseline around my nostrils and genitals. I place a no-pest-strip under the bed sheets to help keep the mites away. I also take a Benadryl on most nights to help sleep.

**12:00 midnight.** Well, another day is over, and as I reflect on this dilemma, I say a prayer for all the fellow mite sufferers throughout the world. Many of whom do not know what it is that is afflicting them, and many do not have the means to purchase the needed supplies to help them effectively deal with this. So, I thank the Lord for his provisions and helping me get through another day. Those that have never gone through this have no idea how much it can impact a person's life. The relentless biting, crawling, and itchy lesions that don't seem to heal, as well as the mental strain from the daily battles and not sleeping very well. Each night as I go to bed my desire is to wake up in the morning in a world without torment or suffering.

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- Home
- **\*\*FAQ\*\***
- Mighty Mite
- Bird Mite Nightmare!
- A House Infested...
- Mental Anguish
- Strategies
- Forum
- Research
- Other Resources
- Diary
- Contact

---

## Comments & Feedback

Questions, Comments, Feedback... [administrator](#)

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### You can help!

If you find this website helpful, please consider donating to help keep it going. Donations of any amount gladly accepted to help defray the ongoing costs of web hosting, software upgrades and

**Thank You for your website! It was very helpful to have so much information in one place! Our story: Recently my wife and I were itching and scratching every time we went into the garden, and after doing some research decided we might have chiggers in our lawn. Luckily for us a neighbor is an entomologist, and after collecting some samples from my arm with masking tape and taking them to him, he told me they were bird mites. This was the clue I needed, and I immediately realized that the seemingly harmless Mynah bird nest in our roof/attic must be the source of our irritation. Sure enough when I climbed up to the nest site the mites were visibly pouring out of it. I had to tear open some boards to get at it, and found a dead bird within, and mites swarming everywhere. With the help of your website I was able to formulate a plan. This included Murphy's Oil Soap solution, Sulfur,**

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**Thank you for your support!**

**Diatomaceous Earth and even Arrid Deodorant. Removing the birds nest was an essential first step. The Sulfur really helped kill them at the nest as well. As an extra step I sprinkled the DE around the yard and attic in areas I thought might have been affected. We already seem to have controlled them somewhat, but it is only day two of my treatment plan. I sure hope I got them all before they moved into the house! The deodorant is really helpful for the itching as well. I think early detection and removal of the source is crucial, but after reading some of the other stories I am crossing my fingers and praying that this doesn't go on for weeks, months, or years. Thanks again for making this information available! P.**

---

**When two rock pigeon's started their courtship on our balcony I thought - Ah sweet. They made a nest in a pot plant on the balcony and laid 2 eggs. The chicks hatched and we watched as the parents took turns feeding and caring for them. Little did I know I was to going to hate these birds. The one morning I woke up to something crawling across my face I brushed it away and again I felt a crawling. And in my hair crawling - Argh!**

**I looked on my white pillow and saw it covered in little bugs. I collected some on some sticky tape and took it to the pharmacist who confirmed my suspicions - bird mites! I happened on this site. Your help has been incredible, I went home and fumigated, vacuumed the carpets, laundered bedding, washed down the balcony and got mite spray from a pet store. By now the babies were fully grown with all their feathers, so we shooed them away and threw away the pot plants, put up bird detractors. I think I have got rid of them, and learnt not to let birds roost near us ever again! Thanks to your site. T., South Africa**

---

**Have been struggling with this horrible affliction since moving to my house 18 months ago, a nightmare that fills my waking moments and those few hours of sleep I manage to snatch each night. Interestingly this has led me down many paths not the least of which the discovery that the medical profession is uneducated largely here in Australia regarding the problem - moreover the readiness to jump to conclusions that my problems are psychiatric! Even suffered the indignity of having a dermatologist arrogantly prescribe an extremely strong and dangerous antipsychotic whilst telling me the medication was specifically intended to "kill" the mites from the inside. I am starting to wonder if the real reason my house's former occupant committed suicide was related to the mites? Now it is all starting to make sense and your site has helped me immensely to understand that I'm not alone in this bizarre situation. Now to educate the rest of the populace! A., Western Australia**

---

**I have lived with this nightmare for years, since doves and pigeons nested in the void utility space in my apartment in LA., infesting the apartment. And now pigeons and doves have entered the attic of my home here in AL., causing an infestation of this house. The problem has been so bad that at times I seriously thought I was cursed for having done some terrible deed. Now your site has given me some hope. I adopted a cat, thinking that a companion animal would help with the depression, but now I see that she is suffering, too. I can't bear the thought of this sweet innocent little feline being tormented like I've been. At least I've found your web site and bookmarked it so I can look at it further tomorrow. Thanks again. J.**

---

**I just want to say "thank you" for sharing your stories and strategies for getting rid of these awful pests! We live in a three-story condo, with the kitchen and main living area on the second floor. Some time in June birds built a nest in the window box off the kitchen window. At first, we thought it was great to watch the baby birds...then I noticed tiny little creatures coming in the window. I immediately closed the window and kept it closed, realizing that they were mites. I called a company who specialize in birds and exterminating. They never returned my call. I then tried the wildlife center, who informed me that to remove the nest was against the law. They suggested that I tape off the window, but that there wasn't anything else I could do. Honestly, I didn't want the birds to die, so I ignorantly left them. I now wish that I had just got rid of them, knowing what I know now. Mites are persistent! After reading info on this site, I'm going to try this again, but with the recommended fogger. I seem to be the only one in my family who is itching. I've lost sleep and thought I was just being ridiculous. I now have ear itching and I believe they are on me. It is totally disgusting. I look forward to trying all other suggestions. I had already thought to buy the coal tar shampoo, thinking that if it wasn't mites (and not dandruff), that it might be another skin irritation. I'm hoping this is the end of this.**

**T.**

---

**I just wanted to write and express my gratitude. Last year in the summer, I was diagnosed with scabies and it was a living nightmare going through what it took to get rid of them. Today I realized they had returned, and I found that odd. Then I realized that I could see them so easily (I actually caught one in the act of test biting me), and it was a tell tale sign it wasn't scabies. I looked it up in Wikipedia**

**to be more certain and had seen a note "often confused with bird mites." I then realized that there was a bird nest on each of the a/c units on my apartment complex. So last summer and this summer I was basically blowing bird mites into and all over my apartment when I switched on the air!! They were creeping in through the screens too. The photos on your site and others identify the little creepers that I captured. The information you provided was also quite helpful. It's amazing how akin some of the symptoms and solutions to bird mites are to those for scabies. There is an over the counter product I think called Raid Max that I used last time around and it was AMAZINGLY effective for my apartment. It's a do it yourself fumigation style thing and you get three canisters per box for a very reasonable price which was plenty for my two bedroom apartment. It's still cheaper than hiring a pro if you trust yourself to find all their hiding spots. Of course I realize now it helps to remove the source of the problem first!!! Thanks T.**

---

**Thanks for your advice, over the last week I have been vacuuming everyday and I found a mite spray for bird cages which I have been spraying everywhere! The good news is that I think I have got rid of them, the last 2 days have been itch-free! If it wasn't for your website I probably wouldn't have taken any action because I read an article that said that bird mites will die after 10 days without a bird host. So, I hope that life can go back to normal now, although I have a new hatred for pigeons! B**

---

**This Thursday, while pet sitting for a friend, I took down a fern that a pigeon had been nesting in to water and clean out all the dead stalks for her. Shortly thereafter, I began**

**to itch and took a look at the nest on the paper plate I had left it on to shown my grandchildren. There were many tiny bugs on the plate. Overnight I broke out in tiny red spots with some welts under my arms and around my waist. It's now Sunday morning, I have more bites that itch like crazy and creepy crawling sensations on my body. I'm very glad I looked this up on the web and found your site. Since my children and grandchildren live with me, along with 4 dogs, 3 cats and two birds, the spread potential is scary. Thank you for the information and the resource you provide. I'll try the cures and keep you posted on what works for me. J**

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**I'm glad you've provided a forum for people that have this scourge. Many times they are diagnosed with (delusory) parasitosis and they get absolutely no help or support. You're providing a great service! Thanks again, M**

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**Thanks again for the website! It helps to know that there are others who can share their experience and what has worked for them! D**

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**First. Thank you so much for putting this site together. I was literally going out of my mind (everyone's starting sentence I am sure) before I was recommended to see your site. I had done so many of the things recommended just through trial and error it was a little eerie reading the suggestions and the posts. Thank you for all of your help. You are definitely giving a great service to the world. M.**

---

**"You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry."**

**Psalm 10:17**

"The prayers sent to God are often answered in the kindness of strangers."



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- Home
- **\*\*FAQ\*\***
- Mighty Mite
- Bird Mite Nightmare!
- A Family Nightmare!

• A House Infested...

• Mental Anguish

• Strategies

• Forum

• Research

• Other Resources

• Diary

• Contact

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## A Family Nightmare!

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Several months ago my daughter was complaining about her head itching. I thought it was because I changed shampoo. We switched back to what we were using and her itching was the same. She tried hot oil treatments and she would only get temporary relief. I kept checking her head for lice and nothing but little bites all over her scalp. I decided it was time for a nix kit and finally she had relief. I then did all the bedding in hot water and the normal routine we are to do for treating head lice. The next day more itching and I was also itching from cleaning her room. My boyfriend however had already been to the ER several times before this with rashes, thinking it was from the floral scented dryer sheets and I had just got done rewashing all his laundry. Then we thought body lice after looking for answers on the net.

The stories I was reading just didn't add up. I read head lice stays mostly on the head...we were itching all over and body lice stays mostly on the body. Our heads were itching and the

**crawling was something out of a horror movie. We had bites all over us. We tried the olive oil and saran wrap on our heads the crawling got worse and bites all over our neck and hair line. Then they attacked our eyebrows and lashes. The next thing I knew we are all fighting over the shower and tub, scalding our heads. We bagged all of our clothes and even had to bag books, shoes, and the next thing you know our everyday belongings are all outside bagged on the porch.**

**I was so ashamed wondering what the neighbors were thinking, our porch looked like a thrift store. I fogged the house, sprayed all the methoprine and permethrin and had to go to the ER, I privately told them I thought we had body lice. They looked at me like "EWWW!" and told me to go to the waiting room. Mind you...if I was infested with lice (the waiting room?) and it would be several hours. I don't think I want any poor old soul in that hospital not to mention babies, children or even my worst enemy to have to deal with this hell my boyfriend, daughter and I are dealing with. Well I split.**

**This has been going on for over three months now. We at the time were even considering...well we just wanted to DIE. Then a few days later, back to the hospital. They prescribed Elimite lotion and said we were to do another nit kit. We couldn't wait for nighttime, that we normally dread, but the Elimite cream was to be applied at night and the nurse said its ok to go to bed and let them bite us because every time they bite us they would die. Well, they had a picnic on us, and we are thinking for every 30 bites that would be 30 less. We couldn't take it any longer, out came the vacuum and steamer with hot water. At 5 am we are all anxious to get our showers, as this was all the longer we were to leave that cream on our skin. We had no relief that night whatsoever. After the showers we were still miserable and going on our third bottle of tea tree oil, which was our only relief. I would even mix it in our shampoo, nit picking our long hair to pieces day in and day out.**

**My boyfriend had me shave his head bald. We experimented with a lot of different things for some relief like gojo in my hair, then mayo, vicks, muscle rub, hot sauce on my legs and at the same time I am very upset because the hospital didn't do a skin scraping and I didn't know what we were up against and fighting. Here it is several weeks before Christmas everyone is decorating for the holidays and I am sealing off rooms with plastic and no heat in them, thinking whatever it is I will freeze it to death. At this time we are very close to a nervous breakdown. Constantly crying, no answers, no one to talk to, wouldn't answer our door to visitors and were very close to the end of our ropes.**

**It's wintertime but we couldn't dress warm, wear socks or shoes, weren't able to cover up, we couldn't even sit on our couch, stayed confined to our tile floor in the dining room... sleeping sitting up on hard chairs, burned my daughters bed, and deciding to burn everything we had. Washer and dryer running nonstop. Then I got this idea scabies has to be a mite, for there were these little tiny bugs you could barely see in the bathwater, and we would see different things coming from our hair with a flashlight in the tub. It must of been its different life cycles, and every time I would do any extensive cleaning it would get worse. We even used the Shark Steamer on everything. I kept feeling a lot of crawling and biting on my skin.**

**Then I called the hospital and they told me to call my doctor, we might need a stronger prescription, that the lice or scabies might be resistant to the pyrethins. I was thinking "Oh my dear God in heaven please help us", our bodies can't take any more poisons. I kept wondering what I was doing wrong...being the clean freak that I have always been and now graduating to a new level called 'obsessive compulsive'. We would go days without sleep while researching on the net. I read all about scabies and again I knew it wasn't scabies because the Elimate**

cream should have relieved us and didn't, and the bites were different. I call this hotline on the internet thinking maybe this person will educate me about the scabies. Well, it turned out to be even worse, they told me it was Morgellons and to watch this 7 minute video and call them back. I watched the first minute of it and couldn't watch anymore. I started shaking, thought I was going into a convulsion from the shaking. I ran to the bathroom and broke down crying while in the tub. Then I prayed to God even harder and lo and behold I find this website [www.whatsthatbug.com/worst.html](http://www.whatsthatbug.com/worst.html) and the bird mite story entitled "The Worst Bug Story Ever" I read fit was what I am going through to a 'T'!

I feed the birds close to my house and they do get in my attic ceiling. I realize now what I am up against and I have recently got the infestation under control thanks to birdmites.org. I think your website is absolutely wonderful! I bookmarked it and live by it everyday. I just stocked up on mouthwash, gold bond powder, muleteam borax, epsom salts, etc. We are now having an early Christmas for our prayers were answered. Our home isn't totally mite free but is bearable and under control, we have a lot of sealing up to do. All we want for Christmas this year is for our lives to be back to normal, it was the everyday little things we would do that we miss. We feel we will never be the same from this nightmare but at the same time we are very relieved to know what was attacking us and our home. I do feel very strongly that the public and health care professionals should be aware of this mite infestation so people can be treated properly and know exactly what they are up against. If it was posted on the State Health Dept. and the CDC websites where a lot of people go to find answers like I did, maybe it would have saved our sanity.

**K**

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## BIRD MITE INFESTATION STRATEGIES...PRINTER PAGE

### ENVIRONMENT

Bird mites tend to wander away from a vacated birds nest in late spring and early summer. They will then look for an appropriate host and frequently it is a person in the nearest house or apartment. To avoid being the recipient of these unwanted guests, remove bird feeders and bird houses from the yard and trim tree limbs near the house. Be wary of birds nesting in nearby trees, and underneath window air conditioners. To remove a vacated nest, wear vinyl gloves and place the nest in a sealed bag in the trash. Clothes should be removed and washed immediately. Spray around eaves and windows with an effective miticide.

*To avoid being the host to unwanted bird mite guests, trim overhanging tree limbs and branches in the spring. Also, trim shrubs and over-growth near windows. Use screening to cover chimneys, broken eaves, and other places where birds can build nests on the home.*

Small birds often will build a nest underneath a window air conditioner unit, hidden from sight. It provides protection from predators and the weather in the spring and summer. Unfortunately, they often leave behind bird mites after the young birds leave the premises. The mites then become unwelcome guests in the home. It is a frequent complaint from people with bird mites in the home. To prevent birds from nesting there; measure and cut aluminum foil and duct tape it to the bottom sides of the a/c unit and the window frame.

Once a home has been invaded by bird mites, they are very difficult to remove. They are too small to be easily seen and will hide in places that make it difficult to clean or spray with insecticides. If the home invasion was only recent, then you may want to consult with a PCO who is familiar with bird mites. Unfortunately, many PCOs are not experienced with bird mite infestations or they may need a sample before spraying, which can be difficult to obtain. A miticide fumigant is often the ideal way to get rid of them in a heavily infested home. Mite samples can often be sent to a local county cooperative extension or a university entomology dept, to have them identified.

*TIP: No matter which treatment option is used, a follow-up treatment is usually required about 7-10 days later to eradicate the previously unhatched mites.*

A home that is heavily infested is best treated with tenting and fumigation. Nothing else will be as effective. However, many do not have this option available; either from being in an apartment or else the expense is too much, as it could easily exceed \$3000 to fumigate a home. Vikane gas is often the treatment of choice for fumigation, at 10x concentration. Some PCOs will resort to ULV fogging, with mixed results; depending on the chemicals used and how thorough the application. Keep in mind a ULV fogger can produce particles no smaller than about 5 microns, whereas a thermal fogger produces particles as small as .5 microns; which can more effectively penetrate into infested furniture fabrics, carpeting, etc. An effective miticide (not pyrethrin or permethrin) needs to be used and a repeat application needs to be done about a week or two later. Also, wall cavities, crawl spaces, and the attic should be treated with a residual chemical, such as Delta Dust.

*To capture mite samples from a heavily infested room: Place a pan of hot, steaming water in the middle of a darkened room at night. Place a single light over the pan, preferably a red IR lamp. Leave the room undisturbed for a couple of hours. You will need to use a strong magnifier to see them in the water. Place samples in a vial with alcohol to preserve.*

Bird mites will more frequently infest the bedroom, since they are most active at night. The mattress, box spring and pillows should be encased in zippered vinyl protectors, to prevent infestation. They can be wiped down nightly with a Swiffer wet mop that is sprayed with a 50/50 solution of vinegar and 91% rubbing alcohol, orange oil, or with a diluted bleach solution. Alternately, you could use a good bug spray a few hours before bedtime. Other non-toxic alternatives include an enzyme cleaner, Boric Acid and water solution, Dawn soap solution, etc. This spraying and cleaning is a royal pain to do nightly but it can help significantly with getting a few hours sleep.

*FYI: Strong scents in the environment can help keep bird mites from swarming; as it limits their ability to communicate with each other.*

If possible, remove the headboard and footboard to minimize the places where the mites can hide. A metal bed frame is easier to clean than wood, as wooden ones are more easily infested. You can also have the legs of the bed frame wrapped with sticky flypaper so that they aren't able to crawl up from the floor. You should keep the bed away from the walls so they cannot get on the bed so easily. During a heavy infestation, the bed linen should be used only once and then put in a sealed plastic bag with mothballs until washed. Clean linens should be applied right before bed.

*Please do not donate or give away used furniture and clothing that has been infested by mites. They should be discarded in the trash. The person who never receives these items will be forever grateful!!!*

Carpet, especially in the bedroom, makes it hard to eliminate a mite infestation. Wood and tile floors can more easily be cleaned. Evercare, which makes the lint rollers, also makes a large handle wide tape roller that can be used on hard floors, and even the walls. If the floor is carpeted, daily vacuuming may be required. One solution that is somewhat effective with carpeting is a mite dusting powder. For a long standing infestation the carpet may need to be removed.

*FYI: If the home has air conditioning and a dehumidifier, and the humidity is kept low, mite activity will be considerably less than a home without a/c in a warm and humid climate.*

When a room is heavily infested, bird mites will not only be in the carpeting but on the walls and ceiling; especially if the carpet has been recently treated with a mite dusting powder or bug spray. A Swiffer wet mop can be used for these surfaces. Apply an effective bug spray to the pad and wipe down the walls, ceilings, and other hard surfaces, preferably in the evening when mite activity increases.

*MITE DUSTING POWDER: An empty talc bottle that is partially filled with Sevin 10% dust and Hartz Flea & Tick Powder can be an effective miticide. Use 5 parts Sevin to 1 part Hartz, and make the container about half full. The dusting powder can be puffed onto the carpet, in the car, behind cabinets, in closets, etc. Avoid breathing the dust. A non-toxic mite dusting powder can be a 50/50 mixture of Boric Acid powder (used for cockroaches) and Diatomaceous Earth.*

Daily vacuuming is one of the most important things to do for reducing mite activity in the home. A small hand held vac is required for all the surface cleaning. You can use it on your clothing, on your skin, small surfaces like the computer, furniture, etc. The filter should be strong enough to prevent them from escaping. Duct tape the opening after use to prevent the mites from escaping. The Black & Decker Dust Buster is often recommended, as it seems to have a good filter and more suction than some of the other inexpensive hand vacs. When using an upright floor vac on carpeting, be sure to vacuum in hidden areas as mites tend to hide during the day. Seal the end of the bag with duct tape after use and put it in the freezer until it is used again. Bagless vacs are not a good idea and a bag type vac is preferred. For the car and for remote locations, a cordless vac can be used, although a car wash vac is more powerful and should be used frequently.

*TIP: Use the chemical type of mothballs with Paradichlorobenzene, not the 'old fashion' type, when storing clothing, etc. Keep in mind the chemical can attack some plastics, so precaution is needed for some items.*

Household furniture is another place where bird mites like to hide. They seem to have an affinity for cotton and most fabrics. Leather and wood furniture is preferred to upholstered furniture, as it is much easier to clean and less susceptible to infestation. The mite dusting powder can be applied to the underside of furniture.

*Remove clutter from living spaces to minimize the places bird mites can hide. They generally will hide during the day, and so stacks of magazines, newspapers, etc, should be discarded. Personal items should be kept in sealed plastic bags whenever possible. Mothballs can be added to the bags as needed.*

## **AUTOMOBILE**

The automobile can be a major headache for those afflicted with mites. They can burrow into the headliner, the seats, the carpeting, in the dash, etc. Leather seats are preferred to cloth seats, and even a sun roof can help keep the mites away some while driving. Mite dusting powder can be applied to the carpeting. If using a fogger: Turn the heater on high for a few minutes to stimulate mite activity. Fog in the evening and make sure the outside air vent and windows are closed, allow to stay closed until morning. Remove a battery terminal to eliminate any risk of electrical problems. Cover the plastic on the dash with something to prevent the aerosol

from fading the clear plastic. Raid makes a home fogger with Cypermethrin that can be used in the car (using the precautions mentioned).

Other tips for reducing mite activity in the car include: Hanging a no-pest-strip from the rear view mirror at night, keeping a cordless vac handy, using a lint roller for pulling them off the skin, placing Bounce fabric sheets in all the seats cushions, placing the car in the hot sun in the summer, and in the winter keep the windows down slightly on cold nights (as extreme temperatures will limit their ability to reproduce and aggressively bite).

*Regarding insecticides; Pyrethrin and Permethrin are not effective against bird mites, don't waste your money on these products. Better choices are those with Tralomethrin, Bifenthrin, Cyfluthrin or Esfenvalerate. It is important to vary the type of bug spray used every once in a while as they become tolerant to most things being used. Some effective miticides include Spectracide's 'Bug Stop' with Lambda-Cyhalothrin, Bayer's 'Power Force' with Cyfluthrin (concentrate), and Hot Shot's 'Ultra' with Imiprothrin and Esfenvalerate.*

*WARNING...Always use caution with insecticides and other chemical products, especially in a household with children or pets. Everyone's tolerance to chemical exposure is different, so please consult your health care provider if uncertain.*

## HYGIENE

### SKIN TREATMENT

Daily skin cleansing is important to reduce the mite itching and biting, as bird mites seem to thrive on the skin. Showering is often more effective than bathing, although some have reported good success with a hot bath using Epsom salt. Mites will not die in warm water and so just sitting in a tub will not help. Whether taking a shower or bath, use a loofah scrub pad to remove mites from the skin. Add Epsom salt to a loofah scrub pouch and allow it to dissolve while scrubbing vigorously.

Coal Tar is very effective for itchy skin, and a product highly recommended is Denorex 'Therapeutic Strength' shampoo, which has 2.5% Coal Tar. This is not only used as a hair shampoo, but as a body wash. It is more effective to shower completely first thing in the morning and the last thing at night. A concentrated Coal Tar soap is available at some health food stores. At times after showering or bathing it may be necessary to use a diluted bleach solution to relieve the intense itching and kill the mites on the skin. Spritz this on with a spray bottle (avoid getting it in the eyes), and allow to stay on for a minute or so. After drying off use a medicated talc with menthol, such as Gold Bond 'extra strength'. The tub/shower should also be sprayed with a diluted bleach solution after use.

For the frequently intense itching and skin irritation, a strong anti-itch medication can be helpful. Lanacane 'Maximum Strength' works good. Even a muscle pain relieving product, like 'extra strength' Ben-Gay with menthol and camphor, can often help ease the irritation. Some have had success with Arrid Extra Dry antiperspirant for getting mites off the skin. The active ingredient is Aluminum Chlorohydrate 24%. It seems to be effective for repelling or killing the mites, and can also be sprayed onto clothing, etc. An anti-histamine can often help to reduce the irritation on the skin and reduce the sensation of biting. Some have reported that Zyrtec helps reduce the sensation of crawling and itching. And at night Benadryl can help with these symptoms, as well as to help the person relax and fall asleep. On occasion the physician or dermatologist may need to prescribe something stronger.

*TIP: Take a Bounce fabric sheet and spray some orange oil cleaner onto the sheet. Rub the skin vigorously with the wetted sheet. It can provide some temporary relief from the biting and itching.*

### HAIR/SCALP

Many with thick hair, especially women, have complaints of mites on the scalp, especially at night. Besides the coal tar shampoo, a vinegar/water rinse can be useful when washing the hair and scalp. Some find Tea Tree Oil also helps when added to the shampoo. At bedtime, a shower cap can be worn. Place one or more Bounce fabric sheets in the cap to help repel the mites.

### MOUTH

To keep mites out of the mouth and nose when sleeping, the following mixture can help: Mix together some sublimed sulfur powder and Vaseline in a small jar and apply around the lips and nose at night before bed. Sublimed sulfur (flower of sulfur) can be obtained from a drug store without a prescription. Some have had good success using either Sulfur 8 or Aquaphor, applied to the skin at night. Others have recommended an anti-fungal

cream applied around the mouth, nose and even genitals at night. Wearing a flea&tick collar around the neck at night may also help. Other solutions include putting Bounce fabric sheets or menthol crystals in the bed to repel them. Gargle with full strength original flavor Listerine daily when they are in the mouth.

#### NOSTRILS

Saline nasal flush is good for clearing mites out of the nose and sinus cavities. Obtain 'sea salt' from a health food store, mix about 1 tsp of salt with about 2 ounces of warm water, and mix it until it dissolves. Use a small syringe bulb (like what is used for flushing out ear wax), and fill this with the solution. Tilt your head back and apply the warm salt water solution into your nostrils and sinuses, and then flush it out completely. Another option would be to make a Hydrogen Peroxide and warm water solution to flush out the nostrils. You may need to do this a time or two each day, especially in the morning if the mites were active at night.

#### EARS

Mack's silicone earplugs are effective for keeping mites out of the ears at night while sleeping. During the day, a dropper bottle that has a 50/50 solution of rubbing alcohol and white vinegar, can be effective for clearing mites out of the ears. For ears that itch, hydrogen peroxide can be used. Leave it in for a couple of minutes and then clear it out completely.

#### EYES

To keep mites out of the eyes while sleeping, swimming goggles are effective. The low-profile type are less obtrusive and more comfortable to wear. Be sure that they are snug fitting around the edges in order to keep the little monsters at bay.

#### CLOTHES/LINENS

A good lint roller can be effective for getting them off your skin and clothing. Change the tape frequently. Even a strip of duct tape can be used to pull crawling mites off the skin. Bounce fabric sheets act as a mite repellent and can be put in clothing and shoes worn during the day to reduce the amount of crawling and biting.

Bed linens that are 100% cotton, such as flannel sheets, can more easily become infested and are harder to clean than synthetic fabrics, such as polyester or even satin. The same goes for clothes worn to bed. Some people report having better luck with 'jump suits' or jogging outfits that are synthetic and are tightly woven; which makes it more difficult for mites to penetrate.

Clothes which are contaminated should be kept in a heavy duty plastic trash bag containing mothballs. (Use the chemical type with Paradichlorobenzene, not the 'old fashion' type mothballs.) Modern mothballs have a scent that does not linger in clothing, and the chemical is effective against mites and the eggs. You can also add a Hot Shot 'no-pest strip' (that contains Dichlorovos) to the bag. Clothes that are infested may need to be laundered after wearing only once. The same goes for bed linen that is heavily infested.

*TIP: Invest in a good quality steam iron (with burst-of-steam button) for the daily ironing that needs to be done.*

Frequent laundering of clothing and bed linens is important to keep mites under control. Use the hottest water possible and add about a cup or two of ammonia to the wash. Bleach can be used with white materials and bed linens. It may be necessary to turn up the hot water tank to at least 130 degrees F in order to be effective. (This may not be an option in a household where toddlers can turn on faucets, as the water could be scalding.) Epsom salt or Borax can also be added to the water. Clothes dryer should be on the highest heat setting possible. Gas dryers tend to get hotter than electric ones. Place a couple of Bounce fabric sheets in the dryer and make sure clothes stay in for a long period of time. Clothing should be steam ironed on the high heat setting before being worn. Even socks and underclothes should be steam ironed. Clean clothes should be stored in containers with mothballs until they are ready to be worn.

#### LAUNDRY TIPS:

Put in the laundry soap, ammonia and epsom salt with the water prior to putting in the clothing. (Bleach instead of ammonia for some items). Fill the washing machine only half full of water for the load being washed. (This produces a more concentrated wash). Let the machine agitate the load for a few minutes to saturate the soap and chemicals in with the wash load completely. Then shut off the machine and let it sit for about a half hour or more. Then turn the machine back on to complete the cycle. Although the water will have cooled off somewhat, it can still help kill the mites and eggs effectively this way; as most machines cycle from the hot water wash to the cold water rinse fairly quickly. Front loaders are less effective for cleaning using this method because they do not saturate the water as completely.

*Denorex, Sulfodene and a good loofah scrub pad should be in your arsenal in the war against bird mites. These are very effective skin care products.*

## PET HYGIENE

Like in humans, mites prefer warm, moist areas; and will get in the ears, mouth, and even eyes. This will be especially true in pets, as mites will have a harder time penetrating the animal's skin. Some have reported good success with 'Thiabendazole' for their pets. It is a medicine to treat parasites that can be taken internally or applied topically; such as to the dog or cat's ears. It has to be prescribed by the Vet. 'Mitaban', which is used to treat mange mites on dogs, may be beneficial. The active ingredient is Amitraz, which is a very effective miticide. It can be applied as a dip to treat the coat. It has to be prescribed by the Vet. Some have also had success with 'Frontline' products for pets. For internal infestation, Ivermectin is no longer the drug of choice for pets with a bird mite infestation. A research study showed that the amount of the drug needed to effectively reduce the mite population of *D. Gallinae* was near the lethal limit for the host mammal. And a Vet will not usually prescribe the higher dosage required for a bird mite infestation.

Lime-sulfur dip is a safe alternative for ridding parasites from the animal's fur, and can be obtained without a prescription for dogs and cats. An anti-parasitic animal shampoo called 'Rotenone', by Goodwinol, may be effective against bird mites. It is derived from the Derris and Cube Roots, and it is often used by Vets for the treatment of Demodectic mites, lice, and fleas. The shampoo is basically Sulfur, Rotenone, and Benzocaine. It is safe for use on dogs and cats. They also make an ointment that can be used to treat infested ears. Sulfodene, which is made for dogs but is beneficial to human sufferers as well, can be used to treat the animal's irritated skin as it contains sulfur and coal tar. The 'Preventic' tick collar for dogs contains Amitraz and may be beneficial also, and can be obtained without a prescription. As with humans, the environment has to be aggressively cleaned. Bedding should be washed and changed frequently.

## NATURAL REMEDIES

There are some natural non-toxic alternatives that may be beneficial; even if they just bring some short-term relief for irritated skin, or as a deterrent from the biting. Unfortunately, these would not be considered a means to completely eradicate mites. The list is not comprehensive, and as more remedies are recommended or as further research indicates, they will be added.

- Limonene or d-Limonene (orange oil), extracted from citrus peel, is shown to be effective against external pests; including fleas, lice, mites, and ticks, and is virtually nontoxic to warm-blooded mammals. It is sold in concentrate or ready mixed spray bottle, often labeled as a cleaner/degreaser. It can be sprayed on bedding, clothing, in bathrooms, etc.
- Some essential oils have anti-parasitic properties and have been shown to be very effective against mites; these include eucalyptus, cedarwood, peppermint, lavender, and lemongrass. Even burning incense in a room can limit mite activity; as it can disrupt their ability to communicate. A hot bath can be prepared with oils, or a spray bottle solution can be made for applying on the skin. There was a research study which confirmed that some plant essential oils were toxic to *D. Gallinae*, but only with direct contact.
- Cedar oil based products have reportedly been used successfully for eradicating bird mites in the home. It is applied with a ULV fogger, according to the Cedarcide website protocol.
- Neem oil has anti-parasitic properties. One study showed that mite traps with 20% Neem Oil reduced the bird mite population 95% versus the non-treated areas.
- Diatomaceous Earth (DE) is a non-toxic pesticide that kills insects by shredding their exoskeleton and drying them out. Some research has shown that *D. Gallinae* resists desiccation, possibly due to its small size. A newer product, called Ecomite, claims to be effective against mites. DE can be applied like the mite dusting powder; into the carpet, in wall spaces and other confined areas. Farmers sometimes liberally apply DE to clothing when working with chickens infested by mites.
- Boric acid powder (Borate) is virtually non-toxic to humans but lethal to small bugs. Often sold as a cockroach powder. It can be used as a mite dusting powder.
- Listerine mouthwash can be used on the skin to bring some relief from the itching, and it also acts as a repellent when spritzed on the skin using a spray bottle.

- Mites do not like menthol, and putting some menthol crystals in an old sock and placing this under the bed sheets may help in keeping them away at night. Vicks 'VapoRub' contains menthol and camphor, and it can be applied to the skin at night.
  - Bounce fabric sheets can be used as a mite repellent. Place some in clothing, shoes, etc.; anyplace where mites are bothersome. Orange oil cleaner sprayed on a Bounce sheet and then wiped on the skin, is effective for reducing the itching and biting.
  - Epsom salt, which has a high sulfur content, can be effective against mites. A couple of cupfuls can be added to hot water when bathing. Epsom salt can also be used when doing laundry with hot water.
  - Vinegar can be used to reduce the itching and skin irritation. A spray bottle of vinegar and salt water is also effective as a mite repellent.
  - Dawn dishwashing soap diluted in a spray bottle has been effective for some, and it can be safely sprayed on many surfaces. The surfactants in Dawn apparently are effective at breaking down the mite's exoskeleton. Mites cannot build up an immunity to this type of treatment, as with pesticides.
  - Windex with Ammonia-D is reportedly successful for killing bird mites. Precaution should be used when spraying this on certain surfaces.
  - Aquaphor, a petroleum based product, can be liberally applied to the skin to repel mites while sleeping. Others find Sulfur 8, baby oil, or Vaseline equally effective.
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**SUMMARY:**

- Remove the source of mites (if known)
- PCO consultation if possible
- Bug spray and mite dusting powder
- Daily vacuuming and cleaning
- Lint roller for clothing and skin
- Frequent bathing / showering
- Seal mattress, box spring and pillows with vinyl protectors
- Benadryl or sleep aid at night
- Infested items in sealed bags with mothballs
- Frequent laundering of clothing and bed linen
- Steam iron all clothing on high heat before wearing
- Patience, Prayer, and Perseverance...