

CAT FLEA

CTENOCEPHALIDES FELIS

A quick ID for the Cat Flea.

If in doubt, contact a trained and professional Pest Technician.



DESCRIPTION

Larva & Pupa

- Eggs are microscopic, white and usually laid on or near the host animal.
- Larva are mobile, elongated and have no legs allowing them to live and feed within carpets and animal bedding.
- Larva feed on organic matter within the environment as well as the faecal matter of the adults.

Adults

- 3mm long, wingless and usually brown in colour.
- Commonly misidentified with *C.canis*
- Can be identified through the presence of comb structures on the head, as well as their abundance and distribution of these combs.
- Adults will feed on the blood of their hosts, whilst *C.felis* prefer cats, they are considered to be more generalist and opportunistic and will happily feed on a range of domestic pets.

LIFE CYCLE

Eggs	Will hatch within 2-6 days
Larva	Will develop within 5-15 days
Pupa	Will develop within 5-19 days
Adult	Will live for 7-21 days.

Suspended animation

The pupal stage of the cat flea can enter a state of diapause, waiting for extended periods of time for a host animal to present itself.

When the pupa is disturbed by vibrations the casing will rupture and the flea will immediately leap towards the source.

POTENTIAL ISSUES

- **Disease Transmission:** Fleas can spread diseases to cats and other animals.
- **Anaemia in Pets:** Large flea infestations can lead to blood loss and anaemia, especially in kittens or weakened animals.
- **Rapid Reproduction:** Fleas reproduce quickly, making infestations difficult to control if left untreated.
- **Infestation of Home:** Fleas can spread to carpets, furniture, and bedding, leading to a widespread household problem.

SIGNS OF INFESTATION

- Larva are primarily focused on feeding, and will not move far from infested materials.
- Adults are highly mobile, and tend to move around sites.

CONTROL

Exposed adults can be controlled using coarse compression sprays.

Larva can be controlled using Insect Growth Regulators to prevent them from becoming adults.

Additionally heavy hoovering will significantly reduce the number of larva, eggs and their foodstuffs as well as cause flea pupa to emerge and become exposed to the coarse compression sprays for the control of the adult stages.

Control on two fronts.

Because Cat Fleas undergo a complete metamorphosis, leading to a control program that needs to consider both the larva and the adult in order to achieve complete control.

Adults will be the most visible, jumping up towards the hosts, often biting humans on the legs between the ankle and knee.

Larva will live feeding on the detritus in bedding and carpets, they are small legless worm like larva and when in their last stages will be visible to the naked eye.