

Psocids fact sheet

Psocids or booklice are soft bodied insects, yellowish brown in colour and rarely exceed 1-2mm in length. Some species have two pairs of membranous wings although there is the tendency to lose the wings in many species.

Occasionally, especially in the autumn months, people find their food cupboards have become infested by these tiny insects. They are often discovered in goods such as flour, milk powder, sugar or almost any dried food. They dislike light and are found in folds in packaging and cracks and crevices in cupboards.



Are Psocids dangerous?

No, they are common but harmless insects.

Psocids do not generally cause any damage or destruction, or spread disease, but people don't like discovering live creatures in their foodstuffs.

How can infestations be prevented?

Infestations are not caused by poor hygiene and are just as common in the newest and cleanest of homes as they are in older properties. These tiny insects dislike light or disturbance and prefer dark, warm, humid places, though they can tolerate dry conditions for some days.

If you find psocids in your kitchen, don't use an insecticide as you risk contaminating your food. The best method of eradicating them is to remove and dispose of all affected food. Clean cupboards with a dry cloth, or vacuum them and empty contents into a dustbin kept outside. Make sure the storage area is dry before restocking. This may be achieved by using a warm air blower such as a hair dryer.

Remember

Keep cupboards well ventilated and dry. Check cupboards regularly and check 'use by' dates. Check food on first opening, to ensure it is not infested. Safeguard against the warm, moist and dark conditions psocids like.