

How to Get Rid of Drain Flies Fast

By Ankit Zadi (FliesOnly.com)

Drain Flies also known as moth or sink flies are a common nuisance in homes. These flies live and breed in the organic matter present inside moist drains and hence they are mostly found in kitchens and bathrooms.

Drain flies are not a harmful breed of flies and despite of the fact that they come from drains, they do not transmit human diseases. Because of this, they have become an integral part of many water dependent ecosystems.

Although they are harmless but their presence in your bathroom or kitchen make you feel yucky. In this article, I am going to show you how you can get rid of these drain flies.

But before we move ahead, let's make ourselves familiar with these pesky creatures.

What are Drain Flies?



Physical Appearance:

Drain flies are very small (typically 2 to 5 mm in length), light grey or tan coloured flies with short body and leaf shaped wings. The body and wings are covered with small hair which gives it a fuzzy appearance. Wings are too large when compared to the body, drain flies fold their wings in a characteristic roof like pattern.

Behaviour & Habitat:

Drain Flies are typically nocturnal insects and are associated with damp habitats. They are not very good at flying, they fly in a jerky, irregular pattern. Adults can be spotted resting on walls and ceilings of the infested areas. Another important thing about them is that they do not bite.

Feeding Habits:

Drain flies feed on damp, organic resources that are easily available near the infested areas, such as decaying vegetation, and other microscopic plants and animals.

Life Cycle:

Drain flies lays eggs mostly in decomposing organic matter found in drains and pipes. The eggs are brown or cream in color and hatch in 32 to 48 hours. The larvae feed on the gelatinous drain matter and reach the maturity age in 9 to 14 days. Drain fly larvae are known to survive in high temperature and low oxygen conditions. Drain Flies have a life cycle of 1 to 3 weeks.

In small numbers, these flies can also be considered beneficial as their larvae can break down the materials that clog drains.

Damages:

- Drain flies can grow quickly and hence they can multiply in a few days creating a nuisance for you.
- Though drain flies are not reported to transmit any diseases to humans, they are capable of doing mechanical contamination of food stuff as they originate from a filthy source.
- They can intensify bronchial asthma in some people.

Now let's see how to find the infested areas and breeding sources of these drain flies.

Signs of Drain Fly Infestation:

Before learning how to get rid of drain flies, it is important to find the drain fly infested areas.

To find this there are two methods which can be used:

1. Spotting the Drain Flies: This is a very simple way to identify the drain fly infested areas. Here, you have to find the drain fly adults by naked eye. The adults can be spotted resting on walls and ceilings of the infested areas. As these flies are not good at flying, their source i.e. (breeding area) is very near to the infested area.

When you spot some adult drain flies, find a nearby pipe or drain. The drain or pipe will be acting as the breeding source for these flies. In case there are multiple pipes or drains near the infested area, you may need to use the second method to find the actual breeding source.

2. Drain Test: In this test, cover all the drains outlets and pipes with a sticky tape, so that when drain flies try to come out of the source they get stuck to the tape, giving us infestation proofs.

Follow the below steps to do this:

1. First of all, clean and thoroughly dry the drain areas in your kitchen and bathroom.
2. After this, in the evening (this is important because drain flies are most active during night), place a piece of clear tape over the drain outlets, pipes etc. in your kitchen and bathroom. Place the tape with the sticky side facing downwards. Do not completely cover the drain with tape, as this will prevent flies from coming out of the drain.
3. Leave the tape overnight or a weekend if possible. After that, check the tape. If you find any flies sticking to the tape, you have found the breeding source. If not, repeat the test for 4 more nights to account for differences in the breeding cycle.

How to Get Rid of Drain Flies:

For your convenience, we divide the process of getting rid of drain flies into two parts. The first part will deal with the cleaning of drains to destroy the drain fly eggs and larvae, while the second part will deal with the killing of adult flies.

Part 1: Destroying the breeding source:

Once you have identified the breeding source, you can begin the process of eliminating the slime and dirt deposited in your drains where these flies breed.

1. First clean the drain, from outside. And then pour 2-4 litres of warm water to moisten the drain.
2. Use a metal pipe brush and push it through the pipe, move it in a up and down motion to clean the sides of the pipe. You could also use a plumbing snake to pull out the grime.
3. Next, pour a drain cleaner gel into the pipe trying to coat the sides of the pipe. Drain cleaner gel is specifically formulated to remove the organic matter from the pipes.

Many people say that instead of drain cleaning gel you could also use boiling water and bleach, but these methods are not effective against drain flies because drain fly larvae can survive high temperatures.

4. After few hours of application of the drain cleaner gel, pour plenty of water. You could also use a plunger to flush any remaining organic matter trapped in the pipe.

Part 2: Killing the adult Drain Flies:

After removing the drain fly eggs and larvae by cleaning the drain, you are only left with the adult flies. Since they now have no place to lay eggs, your drain fly problem will disappear when these adults die. To kill these adult drain flies you could use sprays, or swatters. Below is a list of some methods that you can use to kill the adult drain flies:

1. Using Chemical Sprays: You could use chemical sprays to kill the mature drain flies. But the problem with chemical sprays is that they are toxic and hence cannot be used if the infested area is a kitchen.

2. Using Fly Swatters: As drain flies are mostly seen resting on the walls, it is much easier to kill them using a mechanical fly swatter. After killing them make sure to clean the bloody mess from the walls using a damp cloth.

3. Using Liquid Dish Soap Spray: Dish Soap contains borax, which has insecticidal properties. You can take an empty spray bottle, add 5-7 drops of dish soap, and then add 2 cups of warm water. Shake the mixture and spray on the drain flies to kill them.

4. Using a Trap for drain Flies: This method is good if the infested place is your kitchen. Take a bowl and fill it with equal amount of sugar, water and white vinegar. Add 5 -10 drops of dish soap. Leave the bowl overnight beside your kitchen sink. The fragrance of this liquid will attract the drain flies and as soon as they land on it they will immediately drown and die.

How to Keep Drain Fly from Returning:

To ensure that drain flies do not return to your home again, follow the below tips:

1. Keep the drains clean and clog free.
2. Make sure that there is no stagnant water in your bathroom or kitchen.
3. Occasionally spray IGR (Insect Growth Regulator) in your drains. IGR spray prevents the drain fly eggs from breaking out of the larvae stage and hence can greatly reduce the chances of any future infestation.

If the problem is severe, you need to seek professional help.

Article source: www.onlyflies.com