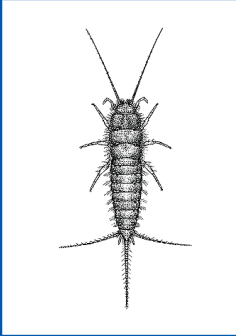


## Fact Sheet #3 – Silverfish

*Thysanura*

### Description

Fast moving, nocturnal, wingless insect growing up to 15mm. It is covered with silvery scales that are easily detached. Silverfish are sometimes called “bristletails” due to the three slender “antenna-like” appendages from their abdomen.

### Habitat

Silverfish inhabit moist cracks and crevices near their food sources. They typically seek locations at 20-30°C and climb smooth surfaces.

### Biology

Females lay 1-3 eggs in a batch. The young resemble small adults and may reach adulthood in 3-4 months and live for 3-4 years. They mostly feed on books and cloth with a particular liking for sizing (glue) on books and wallpaper.

### What you can do to limit infestation:

- Remove cardboard boxes and accumulated papers – discard as much as possible and during the ‘cull’, ensure that materials to be kept are free from silverfish.
- Thoroughly vacuum floors, cupboards and drawers, pay particular attention to corners and undersides of shelves, drawers, etc.
- After treatment, seal any gaps to skirting boards, architraves, etc, to remove potential harborage.
- Use moth balls (naphthalene) when storing clothing for long term.
- Periodically check clothing hanging in wardrobes & closets, linen stored in closets and other items of clothing, linen, etc that are less frequently used.
- Repair any leaking plumbing, and make sure that all pipes are sealed where they penetrate walls or floor surfaces.
- Clean out cupboards and closets periodically, paying particular attention to cardboard packaging, stored magazines or papers – these are food sources.
- Keep wet-areas, especially laundries & bathrooms, clean and dry.
- Periodically rearrange bookcases – checking as you go for signs of chewed page edges and surfaces or silverfish themselves. Book spines can be a favoured harborage, providing both food and shelter.







If you get an infestation:

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