

## Cockroach ID'S:

### What you need to Know



Smokey Brown cockroach shown left  
American cockroach shown right



Smoky Brown  
Cockroach  
Nymphs

## Why Identify Cockroaches?

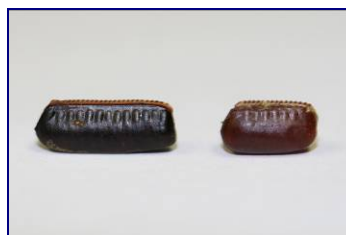
Cockroaches can be major pests in homes, schools, and pretty much anywhere that people live or work. The reason is they like us. We give them food, water, and a nice place to live. Who wouldn't want that? When they begin to be a problem for human beings, we call them pests and we want them out of our living space. This is where cockroach identification becomes important.

There are many different species of cockroaches that can become pests. Their behavior can be very different which affects how we control different species. To pick the best control method, we need to know what species we are dealing with.

## Large Cockroaches

There are two main large cockroaches in the southern region that are common pests. They are the Smokey Brown cockroach and the American cockroach. They are similar in size and shape but the easiest way to distinguish between them is by color. The Smokey Brown cockroach is usually dark brown to solid black in color and has no patterns on its body as an adult. The American cockroach is a reddish-brown color and has some creamy coloration on its body right behind the head as an adult. Adults are really the best way to tell which species you are dealing with. They can be identified because they have wings, and the immature stages do not. The immature stages are called nymphs and unfortunately the nymphs of both species look very similar. They are both a reddish-brown color until they reach adulthood.

They also have similar looking egg cases. They are both reddish-brown to black in color, and have similar looking ridges on the side. Adult females of these species leave their egg cases in various locations to hatch. If you find an egg case like the ones shown below, you know your dealing with large cockroaches.



Smokey Brown Cockroach  
Egg Case (Left)  
American cockroach  
Egg Case (Right)

## Small Cockroaches



Asian cockroach adult



Brown-Banded adults and nymphs



Turkestan cockroach adults

There are many smaller cockroaches that can be problematic in the southern region and they include: the German cockroach, the Asian cockroach, the Brown-Banded cockroach, and the Turkestan cockroach. The biggest pest problems (in terms of small cockroaches) in Alabama come from the German cockroach.

Interestingly enough, the German and the Asian cockroach look very similar, indeed nearly identical. They are the same size and are light brown with two dark stripes right behind their heads. The easiest way to tell them apart is that German cockroaches don't fly. When frightened, Asian cockroaches will take flight while Germans never will. For control purposes the methods are nearly the same for these two species.

The Brown-Banded cockroach is a small cockroach, about the size of the Germans and Asians, and as its name suggests, has an interesting pattern on its body. The bodies of the nymphs are brown-gold with a cream colored band running right across the middle of the body. It also has a cream colored rectangular shape right above that stripe. The nymphs are easily identified this way. Adult females and males both have glossy brown/gold wings. The wings of the adult females don't extend to the end of the body, but the wings of the adult males cover the entire lower half of their bodies.

The Turkestan cockroach is not currently a pest in Alabama but is a pest problem in some of the southwestern states (Arizona, California, and Texas). It is a medium-sized cockroach, smaller than the American and the Smokey Brown, but larger than the Asian and the German cockroach. Unlike many other cockroach species, both adults do not have wings. The adult males are a golden tan color and have wings that cover the lower portion of their bodies. The adult females are dark brown or black, and do not possess wings. The adult female in the picture to the left is carrying an egg case at the end of her body. This is a positive indication that she is an adult since only adults can reproduce. The nymphs are orange from the head down to the middle of the body, and are dark brown from the middle to the end of the body. Because of their color they can be distinguished from the adult females, even though they also lack wings.

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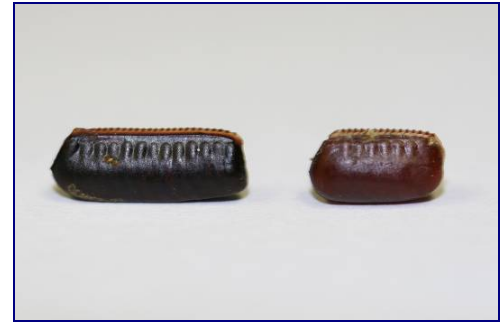
**IDENTIFICATION PICTURES FOR THE LOG BOOK**



Left: adult Smokey Brown cockroach  
Right: adult American cockroach



Smokey Brown Cockroach  
Nymphs



Smokey Brown cockroach egg case on the left  
American cockroach egg case on the right



Asian cockroach adult



German cockroach adults (first two to the left)  
and nymphs, showing size



Left: German cockroach egg case  
Right: Asian cockroach egg case



Brown-Banded cockroach adults (with wings)  
nymphs (without wings)



Brown-Banded cockroach nymph



Brown-Banded cockroach  
egg case